BIBLICAL LITERATURE

A STUDY OF THE LITERATURE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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A Study of the Literature of the Old Testament for Secondary Schools

BY

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TO MY WIFE

LOYAL AND SELF-DENYING

COMPANION

PREFACE

This textbook has been prepared for the use of secondary schools, both public schools and church schools, with the approval of the Board of Control for the Accreditment of Bible Study in the state of Maine. The Commissioner of Education, Dr. Augustus O. Thomas, more than four years ago, appointed a commission to consider methods of teaching the Bible to students of high school age. On this commission were representatives of the four colleges of Maine, the public schools, the Protestant denominations, and the State Sunday School Association. A plan was worked out which, while conserving the freedom of the churches from state control, gave them the benefit of the educational prestige of the colleges and public schools in raising the standards of biblical study. This plan is fully described in Bulletin Number Three, which may be obtained from the Department of Education, State House, Augusta, Maine.

The experience of the past four years with this plan in the churches, public schools, and academies has shown the need of an inexpensive textbook for the guidance of both students and teachers. By omitting the reprinting of the text of the Bible it has been possible to save one half the usual expense of a book of this sort. This omission has the real advantage of sending the student to the Bible itself and of making him familiar, in outline at least, with the greatest classic of the ages.

The thirty-six lessons of this book will be found adapted for use once a week in the academies and high schools as a part of the course in English literature, and in the churches for use once a week in the Sunday school. Indeed, the chapters were used as lessons in a school last year and are the result of the collective experience of five teachers, who have contributed to the material in the book. To one of these teachers, Sadie Brackett Costello, very much of the credit should be given, if these studies should prove valuable. From her wide range of reading she has furnished the chapters with a large part of their illustrative material, and her remarkable success in using these outlines with her students has led to the hope that they may be useful to other teachers.

Many books have been used in the compilation of these lessons; among them the following have proved specially helpful.

Moulton, The Modern Reader's Bible, The Old Testament, Macmillan, New York, $2.25.

Wild, A Literary Guide to the Bible, Doran, New York, $2.00.

Muilenburg, Specimens of Biblical Literature, Crowell, New York, $2.00.

Gardiner, The Bible as English Literature, Scribner's, New York, $1.50.

Hutchins, The Religious Experience of Israel, Association Press, New York, $1.90.

Kent, Historical Bible, Scribner's, New York, $1.50 a volume.

An excellent brief commentary is the Bible for Home and School, edited by Shailer Mathews and published by the Macmillan Company. The volumes on Genesis and Isaiah are especially helpful.

For thorough study the New Century Bible is one of the best aids.

Every library should contain a recent Bible dictionary such as Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible in one volume, Scribner's, New York, $7.00.

The American Standard, Moffatt's, and Weymouth's, are the most helpful translations of the Bible.

Three introductions to the literature of the Old Testament should be mentioned for the sake of those who desire to go thoroughly into the subject: Fowler, A History of the Literature of the Ancient Hebrews from the Earliest Times to 135 B.C., Macmillan, 1912, $2.40.

Bewer, The Literature of the Old Testament in its Historical Development, Columbia University Press, New York, 1922, $5.00.

Driver, An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, Scribner's, New York, 1910, $2.50.

I gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to my wife, Carrie J. Purinton, to my son and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur L. Purinton, and to Mrs. Sadie Brackett Costello for aid in carrying this book through the press.

Permission to reprint extracts from their book has been granted by the following publishers: Charles Scribner's Sons; the Association Press; the University of Chicago Press; William J. Hutchins; George H. Doran Company, from Wild's *Literary Guide to the Bible* and A. R. Gordon's *Prophets of the Old Testament;* The Columbia University Press, from Bewer's *Literature of the Old Testament;* The Macmillan Company, from Fowler's *History of the Literature of Ancient Israel.* (Permission granted to apply to the United States only). Full credit has been given to authorities quoted at the points where the quotations occur.

Herbert R. Purinton.

Lewiston, Maine
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INTRODUCTION

By

Dr. Augustus O. Thomas

State Commissioner of Education

This textbook on the Bible is issued under the direction of the Board of Control for the Accreditment of Bible Study with the hope that it may help meet one of our greatest needs. No lover of mankind can fail to see the need of strengthening the foundations on which civilization rests. No one doubts that there is a world emergency which makes it necessary that we return to the source of the faith of our fathers for inspiration and wisdom. Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States, has said repeatedly, "The thing which the world needs most is a proper spiritual conception of human relationships." This spiritual conception of life is nowhere so well expressed as in the Bible. Professor Cook of Yale did not over-estimate the importance of the world's greatest book when he said, that the English Bible is the chief bond which holds united in a common loyalty and a common endeavor the various branches of the English race, and more than anything else it tends to make perpetual that loyalty and that high endeavor.

In our desire to avoid religious animosity we have gone to the extreme of removing from our

whole scheme of education that very factor which may be the one thing that will prevent universal animosity and will keep men from destroying that vision of the brotherhood of man which is the hope of a progressive civilization. What you put into the minds of your children through your educational system will come out in the life and destiny of the nation. If the Bible is the greatest well-spring of spiritual values known to the human race, and is non-sectarian and non-denominational, why does our plan of the education for the youth of the nation ignore it? The time has come when the leaders of state and church, while preserving intact our great heritage of religious freedom, should unite in a demand that the Bible, the supreme expression in literature of the deepest principles of life, become an integral part of our education.

This was the motive which inspired the Governor of the State and the Legislature in their recent action requiring that the Bible be read in the public schools. The Governor issued a special message on the subject of "The Bible in the Public Schools," embodying an address of mine given before a committee of the Legislature from which I wish to take the remainder of this introduction.

The Bible is the instrument of progress of all western civilization, for those nations which have rested upon it have made greater progress in all lines of human endeavor than those which have not known it. It is the greatest production and the greatest force in the world. It has come down to us

through generations, centuries, almost without changing a jot. It has withstood the onslaughts of the atheist and the pagan and the idolator. It has survived the changing creeds of men. Its very mystery has been its strength and has allowed each individual to read into it that which most satisfied the hunger of his own soul. Strange that we cannot see that religion is individual, personal; that I may read the Bible my way and you may read it yours; that we may not agree possibly on the way of salvation but it cannot be said by intelligent men that any one man or any set of men or any company of human beings, organization or association, has the only royal road to the soul's triumph. The Bible, therefore, is a personal instrument and every man must be allowed to interpret it acording to his own reason, investigation, and the best light he can obtain.

The Bible is the wonder of wonders, a masterpiece of English, perfection of diction, the height of inspiration, complete in history, absorbing in romance, rhythmic in poetry, brilliant in philosophy and proverb, and startling in its revelations. It is the inspiration of law and as our Constitution is the fundamental law of a land, so the Ten Commandments form the basis of all civil and statutory law. Any human law which conflicts with the tenets of the Ten Commandments could scarcely stand on the statute books of the state or nation.

The Bible has been the inspiration of the world's masterpieces in music, in art, and in literature. The

world is richer for Handel's *Messiah,* Meyerbeer's *Prophet Elijah,* Haydn's *Creation;* in sculpture, Angelo's *Moses;* in art, Da Vinci's *Last Supper* and Angelo's *Sistine Madonna,* portraying the mother's love, the finest sentiment which springs from the human heart.

The Bible is the inspiration of literature. The great masterpieces have sprung from it,—Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained,* Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and even down to the later days of Lew Wallace, *Ben Hur,* and Ibanez' *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.* It would not seem exactly right that this book, vast in its storehouse of riches, tremendous in its influence on human life, should be excluded from the learners of today.

No matter how you interpret the Bible, you cannot get away from the fact of its moral and religious significance. There are those who believe literally in the story of creation as found in Genesis—that man came instantly from the word of God. There are others who believe in the long, unfolding process of immutable and unchanging laws. There are those who believe that Job was a real character and suffered pain and humiliation. Others believe that he was a character in Hebrew fiction and played on the stages of the old, old world. There are those who believe that Moses stretched forth his rod and parted the waters of the Red Sea. There are those who contend that the monsoon blew steadily in one direction for a period and piled up the waters of the sea leaving dry sands over which Moses and the

children of Israel passed, but the monsoon changed instantly when its season was over and released the waters to deluge Pharaoh and his host. There are those who believe that God fed the children of Israel in the wilderness by the daily dropping of manna. Others believe that they ate from the fruit of the wilderness in a purely natural way. There are those who believe in the miracle of Christ, while others believe him to be the natural son of Joseph and Mary. But no matter what you may believe concerning the origin and nature of the Bible, you cannot gainsay the fact that as a signboard of human destiny it can never be displaced.

The Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount contain the essence of human relationships, and the embodiment of Christian life is given in the Golden Rule. The simplicity of religious acts and of Christian bearing are found in the words of Christ as he gathered about him his disciples and said, When saw we thee an hungered and fed thee, and he replied, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me. He set up the simple, tangible ideals of Christian service and the spiritual values which the world needs today. Whether Jew or Gentile, Catholic or Protestant, all must agree that the principles of the man-child are eternal, as broad as human interests, as high as justice, and as deep as human hope.

The Governor in his message, the substance of which we have just been giving says, "This statement is one that should be taken to heart by every

citizen of the state." We shall show that we have taken it to heart if we see to it that the Bible is taught to all our children. This book has been prepared by one who has had long experience in teaching the Bible, and the chapters of the book have been used successfully as lessons with high school classes in different parts of the state. I gladly commend it to the consideration of our high schools, academies, and churches.

Chapter I

THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE

1. A New Application of the Word Literature.

The first surprising thing to the beginner in this literary study of the Bible is that the sacred Scriptures can be properly viewed as literature at all. It has always seemed necessary to read and understand it on different principles of interpretation from those by which we explain other books; but when we think accurately about the matter we perceive that the authors of the Bible, whether poets, historians, orators, priests, or story-tellers, had to express themselves through the ordinary channels of voice and pen and use the language and rules of speech of other people in order to be understood. And when we try to explain a difficult biblical passage, we must be guided by the same principles and methods that we use in studying Milton, Bunyan, and Tennyson. While the original books of our Bible were written in Hebrew and Greek, yet for us it is English literature. So well have the translators rendered the Hebrew and Greek into English that the Bible is generally regarded as the standard of literary style for all the English-speaking world. Macaulay, the eminent essayist and historian, asserted that if everything else in our language should perish, the Bible alone would suffice to show the extent of its beauty and power.

2. An Unexpected Variety of Literary Forms.

The reader whose eyes have just been opened to the beauty of the Bible should first survey the whole biblical landscape. When he does take a bird's-eye view of the familiar book under the guidance of one who knows its literary beauties, he will be as surprised as the boy who walks through the woods with a teacher of botany. On every side he finds an astonishing variety of new forms, and a rich and varied beauty to which he had been blind. For example, at Genesis 3 is a vivid *story* in the form of an allegory; at Genesis 37 begins a fascinating *biography* of the boy with the "coat of many colors;" at Exodus 15 one comes upon a brilliant *poem,* The Ballad of the Red Sea; at Judges 5 is the *Ode* of Deborah, an antiphonal song of great literary merit; at Judges 9 is the *fable* of Jotham, which he tells at the expense of his conceited brother; at First Kings 18:20-40 is an *oration* by Elijah, by which he turns the tide of popular sentiment against a heathen religion; at Isaiah 5 occurs a *parable,* by which the prophet suddenly pricks the conscience of a careless crowd; at Daniel 7 is a *vision,* called by scholars an apocalyptic vision because it describes historical events under the form of weird, supernatural figures; Psalm 23 is a *lyric poem* and Job is a *dramatic poem.* Many other forms and figures might be pointed out by our literary guide in the wonderful regions of the Old and New Testaments. It turns out that the literary study of the Bible, while not detracting from our reverence for its religious teachings, does wonderfully enhance our appreciation of the high place which the Bible occupies in the literature of the world.

3. Estimates of the Bible by Literary Men.

Matthew Arnold, the great English critic, says:

"As well imagine a man with a sense for sculpture not cultivating it by the help of the remains of Greek art, and a man with a sense for poetry not cultivating it by the help of Homer and Shakespeare, as a man with a sense for conduct not cultivating it by the help of the Bible."

Goethe, who read the Bible so much that his friends reproached him for wasting his time over it, gives the following estimate of it:

"I am convinced that the Bible becomes even more beautiful the more one understands it. . . . . Let culture and science go on advancing, and the mind progress as it may, it will never go beyond the elevation and moral culture of Christianity as it glistens and shines forth in the Gospels . . . . The greater the intellectual progress of ages, the more fully possible will it also become to employ the Bible both as the foundation and as the instrument of education—of that education by which not pedants, but truly wise men are formed."

Ralph Waldo Emerson, a wide reader of all the best writings in the world, spoke thus of the Bible:

"The most original book in the world is the Bible. . . . Shakespeare, the first literary genius of the world, the highest in whom the moral is not the predominating element, leans on the Bible; his poetry presupposes it. If we examine this brilliant influence—Shakespeare—as it lies in our mind we shall find it reverent, not only of the letter of this book, but of the whole frame of society which stood in Europe upon it . . . . People imagine that the place which the Bible owes in the world it owes to miracles. It owes it simply to the fact that it came out of a profounder depth of thought than any other book."

Sir William Jones says:

"I have carefully and regularly perused these Holy Scriptures, and am of the opinion that the volume, independently of its Divine origin, contains more sublimity, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains of eloquence, than can be collected from all other books in whatever language they may have been written."

William Henry Huxley, in making a plea for the use of the Bible in the public schools of London, said:

> "The Bible is written in the noblest and purest English, and abounds in exquisite beauties of a merely literary form; and, finally, that it forbids the veriest hind who never left his village to be ignorant of the existence of other countries and other civilizations, and of a great past, stretching back to the furthest limits of the oldest nations in the world. By the study of what other book could children be so much humanised, and made to feel that each figure in that vast historical procession, fills, like themselves, but a momentary space in the interval between two eternities, and earns the blessings or the curses of all time, according to its efforts to do good and hate evil, even as they also are earning their payment for their work?"

4. A Table of Literary Forms.

It will be convenient to have for handy reference the following partial list of various literary forms and figures with which the student should become familiar.

POETRY

Lyric	Psalm 23
Elegiac—The Lament of David	2 Samuel I:17-27
Love song	The Song of Songs
Ode—Song of Deborah	Judges 5
Ballad—Song of Miriam	Exodus 15
Anthem—The Nation Israel	Psalm 105
Processional	Psalm 24
Oracles of a Seer	Numbers 22-24
Didactic	Deuteronomy 32
Dramatic	Job
A Wedding Song	Psalm 45
Prayer	Psalm 72
Doom Song	Isaiah 14
Nature Song	Psalm 29
Morning Hymn	Psalm 3
Evening Hymn	Psalm 4
Penitential Hymn	Psalm 51
Communion Psalm	Psalm 103
A Meditation	Psalm 90

Prophetic	Isaiah 53
Riddle	Judges 14:14
Ritualistic	Psalm 136
Proverbial	Proverbs 15
Philosophic	Psalm 139

PROSE

History—Call of Saul	I Samuel 9
Story—Wooing of Rebekah	Genesis 24
Biography—Joseph	Genesis 37-50
Oration	Deuteronomy 29
Sermon	Jeremiah 7
Epistle	Jeremiah 9
Idyl	Ruth
Historical Romance	Esther
Parable	2 Samuel 12
Essay	Ecclesiastes 5:10-6:12
Law	Exodus 20
Wisdom	Proverbs 8
Invective	Joel 3
Emblem Prophecy	Ezekiel 37
Satire	Isaiah 44:9-20
Dialogue	Micah 6:1-8

5. Knowledge of the Form Helps Understand the Meaning.

He who reads an allegory as if it were literal history is likely to mistake the meaning. Men who assert that the Bible teaches that the serpent talked and the ass spoke should remember that Genesis 3 and Numbers 22 are allegories or parables, and that the authors did not mean to be taken literally. This illustrates the need of knowing the literary form which the ancient writer adopted to convey his message. Such knowledge not only adds to our enjoyment in reading the Bible, but also safeguards us against error.

A curious error has been made in the explanation of Job 3:4. Someone who was ignorant of the fact that Job was a dialogue with several persons taking

part, credited the Bible with the saying "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life." But this selfish doctrine is not biblical; it is rather satanic as one may see by observing that Satan was the speaker in verse 4.

Sometimes it is an obscure word or sentence which may be cleared up by the help of the literary structure. For example, in Psalm 19:4 the following poetic parallelism occurs:

> Their line is gone out through all the earth,
> And their words to the end of the world.

The word "line" is found only this once in the Hebrew language, and the lexicographers have no way of determining its meaning. The meaning of the root of the word is entirely unknown. The only way of finding its significance is by a study of the poetic form in which the word is used. It is well known that these two lines form a synonymous parallelism, the meaning of the first line is substantially the same as that of the second. It follows that the subject of the first line should agree in thought with the subject of the second. Therefore "line" is equivalent to "words" and should be translated "word" or "message." In many other ways a knowledge of the form helps make clear the thought.

6. The Life Back of the Literature.

Great literature is produced by great lives, and great lives come to fruition in the midst of great historical scenes. This is true of the Bible. It should be read in the light of its background of epoch-making deeds wrought by men whose names are household words in every civilized nation. As

Longfellow's *Evangeline* and Tennyson's *In Memoriam* gain in interest when read in the light of the incidents which the poems celebrate, so the biblical poems and stories have a richer meaning when the remarkable history out of which they sprang is clearly held in mind.

The following main divisions of the historical background should be remembered by those who wish to relive the scenes out of which grew the world's greatest book.

1. Primitive History: Before the time of Abraham. From that era only dimly remembered oral traditions were preserved.

2. The Patriarchal Period: From Abraham to Moses, 2000 to 1200 B. C. No Hebrew writing of that period has been handed down in its original form. Later writers probably had to rely on oral traditions for their knowledge of the patriarchs.

3. The Beginnings of Hebrew National History: From Moses to Joshua, 1200 to 1150 B. C. Oral traditions only.

4. Frontier Life in Palestine, the period of the Judges and Samuel, 1150 to 1020 B. C. Beginnings of poetry.

5. The Hebrew Monarchy: The reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon, 1020 to 937 B. C. The beginnings of historical writing in I Samuel.

6. The Two Rival Kingdoms, Judah and Northern Israel, 937 to 586 B. C. The great era of prophecy.

7. The Babylonian Exile, 586 to 536 B. C. The

Hebrews settled in three countries: Babylonia, Egypt, and Palestine. A period of great literary activity; earlier writings collected and revised, and new poems and prophecies written.

8. The Persian and Greek Periods of Jewish History: From Cyrus the Great to Judas Maccabeus, 536 to 165 B. C. Alexander the Great conquered the Orient during these periods and extended the influence of Greek thought and the Greek language among the Jews.

The Wisdom books and the Psalms belong largely to this period.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

What true distinction has been made between the Bible and all other literatures?

Why, however, did the Bible writers have to conform to the principles and methods that control ordinary human beings in their use of language?

Name in your notebooks the original languages of the Bible, and write a brief discussion of the translations of the Bible into English. See dictionaries of the Bible and other sources of information.

Look up all the references in paragraph 2 and be prepared for a quiz on the different literary forms in the Bible.

Quote the estimate of the Bible by one of the great modern authors.

Study the Table of Literary Forms and be prepared to give an example of each form mentioned there.

Give two or more examples of the way a knowledge of the form helps one understand the Bible.

Give an illustration from modern literature of the importance of a knowledge of the historical background of a piece of writing.

Memorize the eight main periods of biblical history which form the background on which the literature should be studied.

Part 1

LITERARY SELECTIONS WITH A BACKGROUND OF PRIMITIVE HISTORY

Chapter II

THE CREATION STORIES

The Earliest Hebrew Story of Creation. Genesis 2: 4b-25.
A Later Account of the Creation. Genesis I: 1 to 2:4a.
A Babylonian Parallel.

1. How the Hebrew Stories were Handed Down.

Imagine yourself in the home of Ruth in Bethlehem three thousand years ago. It is a warm starlight evening. Ruth and her husband, Boaz, and their little son are entertaining guests in the summer room on the housetop. A travelling bard is telling stories of the olden time and chanting ballads of the heroic deeds of the fathers. These stories and ballads had not yet been put into written form, but were preserved from generation to generation by bards and prophets who stored them up in their marvellous memories. Deuteronomy (6:6,7) suggests that the fathers also repeated these traditions to their children. It is likely, too, that Hebrew travellers and groups of warriors as they gathered around their campfires at night would recount daring exploits of their predecessors.

Among the many stories thus handed down were probably the following: The Creation, the Serpent

in the Garden, the Great Flood, Cain and Abel, the Crossing of the Red Sea, and Deborah's Victory over the Canaanites. What the legends of Homer meant to the youth of Greece, shaping their ambition and guiding their action, this the Hebrew stories meant to the young men of the Chosen Race. And, as in the case of Homer, the legends were not written until generations later, so the stories of Genesis did not take written form for a long period of time.

2. Comparison of the two Accounts of the Creation.

Genesis 2: 4b-25 was a part of the first great historical document ever written by the Hebrews. It was not until three hundred years later, if we may trust modern scholars, that the priests of Israel prepared their church history of which Genesis I was a part.

But it is not only in date that the two accounts differ, but also in style and in their way of describing God. Genesis 2 is picturesque; it draws a picture of God making man from the dust and breathing into his nostrils the breath of life; He creates a beautiful river that flows through the Garden of Eden; He commands the animals to pass in procession before man to receive their names, and takes a rib from man's side and out of it creates woman.

Read aloud the first of the three sections into which Genesis 2 is divided, 4b-7 (the creation of man), and observe the rhythm, which makes one feel that he is reading poetry. It might be represented thus:

In the day when the Lord Jehovah made earth and heaven,
Then no plant of the field was in the earth,
And no herb of the field had yet sprung up;
For the Lord Jehovah had not caused it to rain on the earth,
And there was not a man to till the ground;
But there went up a mist from the earth,
And watered the whole face of the ground.
And the Lord Jehovah formed man from the dust of the ground,
And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life,
And man became a living soul.

The second section (8-17) describes the garden in Eden, and the third (18-25) gives an account of the creation of the first woman. If it is viewed as an early poetic description of the one God, the Creator, and of the high ideal of marriage, in contrast with parallel accounts in other nations, this narrative will be judged worthy of a place in our Bible.

When we turn to the later account in Genesis 1, we find a less picturesque but a much more dignified description of God. As Creator he simply speaks the word and each stage of the creation is finished in its proper order. God is here distant and unapproachable in contrast with the older version in which He is near and more like a human being, a master workman.

Genesis 1 is also more formal, systematic, and precise in its style. This systematic style is illustrated by the elaborate arrangement of the days of creation into two parallel sets of three whose members correspond. The first day gives us the habitation of light, while the fourth day tenants it with the heavenly bodies; the second day describes the regions of air and water, while the fifth day fills the air and water with birds and fishes; the third day

brings forth the dry land, while the sixth day creates man and animals on the land.

Another wide difference between the two stories is shown by the following table:

Genesis 2:4b-25	Genesis 1:1-2:4a
1. Man fashioned	1. Light created
2. Garden planted	2. Firmament formed
3. Trees, and tree of life	3. Dry land
4. River with four branches	4. Stars, sun, and moon
5. Beasts and birds	5. Living creatures
6. Woman created	6. Man and woman created

3. A Parallel from Babylonia.

In 1875 a Babylonian poem of the Creation was discovered in a library at Nineveh. This poem was known as early as 2000 B. C., which was 1400 years earlier than our present book of Genesis. The resemblances between the Hebrew and Babylonian stories are striking. As there were seven days of creation in Genesis, so there are seven tablets of creation in Babylonia. The order of events in the one is somewhat like the order in the other. For example, man was created on the sixth day in both accounts.

The differences are even more important. In Babylonia we have many gods, and an emphasis upon the grosser features of life. In Genesis we have a lofty view of the one God and of man as made in the Divine image. To illustrate, we quote selections from two tablets:

When above the heaven was not named,
And beneath the earth bore no name,
And the primeval Apsu, who begat them
And Mummu Tiamat, the mother of them all,—
Their waters were mingled together,
And no field was formed, no marsh seen,
When no other gods had been called into being,

Then were created the gods in the midst of heaven.
When Marduk heard the word of the gods,
His heart moved him, and he devised a cunning plan.
He opened his mouth and unto Ea he spoke,
That which he had conceived in his heart, he made known unto him;
"My blood will I take and bone will I fashion,
I shall make man that man may . . . .
I shall create man who shall inhabit the earth.
Let the worship of the gods be established, let their shrines be built.

The contrast between the Bible and the Babylonian account is best illustrated in such stories as that of the struggle between the gods. The goddess Tiamat rebelled against the chief god Marduk. He gathered an army to subdue her. He won the battle, then cut her body into two parts; from the upper half he made the sky, from the lower half he made the earth.

4. Contents and Teachings of the Creation Stories.

When these stories are read in comparison with the accounts of Creation in other literatures, two facts will appear. First, the Bible uses the forms and traditions current in the ancient nations. For example, it has the seven days, or stages, of creation in which the Babylonians believed. The ideas of chaos, water, light, the appearance of vegetation and the animals and man were much alike in several nations. So we are not to look to the Bible for new teachings in science, for it adopts the scientific facts current in the days of the Biblical writers.

Second, the Bible presents an entirely new view of God and man and moral life. Those who are looking for the evidences of inspiration should seek for it in the realm of religion and ethics.

"In the beginning God." The Bible opens with the loftiest thought that man ever conceived. Above all nations, directing the motions of all the heavenly bodies, and guiding the destinies of man, is one God. This is in sharp contrast to the teachings of other ancient literatures. They picture numerous gods, who are frequently quarrelling, whose power and goodness is very limited, and who seem to be competitors of mankind rather than guardian angels. To the Hebrew Bible we owe the priceless belief that at the center and core of this material universe there abides a loving, wise, and powerful being who made all things and cares for all.

In the twenty-sixth verse of the first chapter of Genesis there is another teaching of surpassing importance to mankind; "In the image of God created He him." It is strange that in the very first chapter of the Bible we have the two greatest religious ideas known to man: the unity of God, and the worth of man. Our own day is the first to estimate aright what it means to be made in the image of God. Every person, young or old, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, has something of divinity. Browning in his Rabbi Ben Ezra has expressed this for us:

> "A spark disturbs our clod;
> Nearer we hold of God
> Who gives, than of his tribes that take, I must believe."

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Tell from memory the story of Creation in the first chapter of Genesis.

Repeat the second story of Creation, as given in chapter two, bringing out the differences between this and the account in chapter one.

By what process did these stories find a place in our Bible?

How do these two stories differ in their descriptions of God?

Write in your notebook in parallel columns a summary of what occurred on each of the six days of creation, to show the correspondence between the first and fourth, second and fifth, and the third and sixth days.

Show that the order of events in the first chapter of Genesis is different from that in the second.

What likenesses do you find between the Bible and the Babylonian story of Creation?

In what respect is the Bible story superior?

When you compare the Bible with the Babylonian story of Creation, what two important facts do you learn about the methods and materials of the biblical authors?

Bring into the class quotations from modern literature on the two chief religious teachings of this lesson.

In what way were Haydn's Oratorio, The Creation, and Michelangelo's painting of the Creation indebted to the Bible?

Chapter III

THE SERPENT IN THE GARDEN

Serpent in the Garden. Genesis 3:1-24.
Cain and Abel. Genesis 4:1-24.

1. The Serpent in the Garden.

Every thoughtful person sometimes asks himself how sin came into this beautiful world, which God created and pronounced good. This is the hardest question in the world. The story of the serpent is an attempt by a Hebrew writer to answer that question. The story took the form of dialogues which can be easily arranged by the student.

Dialogue 1. The Temptation

Place: Garden of Eden. Time: morning. Characters: serpent, woman, man.

Serpent (speaking in a tone that suggests distrust of God), "Has God really said you shall not eat from any tree in the garden?"

Woman, "From the fruit of all the trees of the garden we may eat except the tree in the midst. God said, 'You shall not eat or touch it, lest you die.' "

Serpent, "It will not hurt you. God is jealous lest having eaten you know good and evil."

Now the fruit looked appetising, and the woman was fascinated with the idea of becoming wise. So she ate and did not realize any hurt, and then gave

to her husband who ate also. Their consciences began to trouble them, and they tried to conceal their shame by a covering of fig leaves.

Dialogue 2. The Punishment

Place: In the deeply wooded part of the garden. Time: Early evening. Characters: God, woman, man, serpent. God walks about alone, calls to the man, who with the woman has hidden. This should be completed by the students.

2. The Literary Character of Genesis 3.

The story of Gen. 3 has been well called 'The Pearl of Genesis'. Note the actors in the drama: the man and the woman, both innocent, ignorant, untested; the serpent, always and everywhere the object of loathing, yet of fascination; Jehovah, represented as walking in the garden in the cool of the day, apparently in the habit of talking familiarly with the man whom he has made.

Prof. Wild in her valuable book, *A Literary Guide to the Bible,* says: "This is an example of the most spontaneous, original writing we have in the Bible. The simplicity is child-like, but the reach in profundity of the religious and moral feeling is wonderful." The balance and poetic rhythm are brought out in the following translation of certain sections:

> Cursed shalt thou be above all animals,
> And above all the beasts of the field.
> Enmity will I set between thee and the woman
> And between thy offspring and her offspring.
> He shall bruise thee on the head,
> And thou shalt wound him on the heel."

Although these stories in Genesis are printed in our Bible as prose, they are poetic in form as shown by the quotation. Read the lines above and note that the second line in each case is a repetition of the first. The word *animals* in the first line is repeated in the *beasts of the field* of the second line. In the next to the last line, the parallel meaning is brought out in the contrast between the word *head* and *heel.*

Another evidence that this is poetry is found in the many figures of speech: the Serpent talks, God walks in the garden. This reminds us that we are dealing here with allegory, rather than history, for the narrative seeks to trace the origin of the ordinary experiences of life, so common and yet so puzzling. It puts in vivid story-form the philosophy of such things as the distinction of sex, the institution of marriage, the power of sin in the world, the custom of wearing clothes, the peculiarities of the snake, and the pain of childbearing.

3. The Purpose and Meaning of Genesis 3.

The main object of the author is to explain the origin of sin and the nature of temptation. Sin is disobedience to Jehovah's commands, and was first suggested to the mind of the innocent woman by a serpent. Milton thought that the serpent represented Satan, but the Bible makes no mention of Satan until many centuries after the period represented here. Someone has said, "Could there be a better picture of temptation than that of the serpent, slimy, ugly, yet compelling? It can outclimb the monkey, out-swim the fish, out-leap the zebra, out-wrestle the athlete, and crush the tiger.

The serpent finds its way everywhere, over every fence, or barrier, into every crevice or recess. Note the subtle appeal to the physical appetite, to the esthetic, to the intellect. Temptation delights in disguises. It says, 'Why will a man insist on being tied to his mother's apron string? Let him go out and learn something, see the world, taste the sweets of life, and see the things which are beautiful.'" The author of Genesis 3 teaches us to guard against these appeals.

Three important lessons are suggested by this passage: (1) Man had the power of choice, (2) Sin is of man's creation, not God's, (3) Sin severs the happy relations between man and God.

"They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Wav'd over by that flaming brand; the gate
With dreadful faces throng'd, and fiery arms.
Some natural tears they dropt, but wip'd them soon;
The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide:
They hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way."

—Milton: Paradise Lost.

4. The Story of Cain and Abel. Genesis 4:1-15.

This incident in the early history follows naturally the sketch of the beginning of sin. The story is easy to remember if we divide it as follows: verses 1-4, the farmer Cain and the shepherd Abel make their offerings at the altar of Jehovah; verses 5-7, Jehovah rejects Cain's offering because of spirit shown, and Cain is angry; verses 8-12, Cain murders Abel and Jehovah pronounces a curse; verses 13-22, protected by a certain mark, Cain goes out to found a new civilization in which there are cities, music,

and the use of metals; 23 and 24 preserve in verse form a record of the old tribal custom of blood revenge.

Bewer, in his *Literature of the Old Testament,* explains the mark which was put upon Cain, and also helps us understand certain other difficult allusions in this story. He thinks that the mark was probably some stamp on his body to indicate that he belonged to the tribe of Canaanites, a tribe famous for its terrible custom of blood revenge. The story assumes also that there were very many other people in the world besides Adam's family, for Cain went out and built a city. These two illustrations show that this incident belongs to a later stage of history than that of Adam, because the law of blood revenge and the existence of many people implies many generations after the first man.

Some of the principles involved in the story of Cain and Abel are as follows:

1. It is the character and spirit of our service that God observes.

2. Great crimes are committed by men whose characters have crumbled gradually through the effects of little sins.

3. Every man is his brother's keeper, bound by the responsibility of brotherhood to guard him by influences for good. Phelps, in his *Human Nature in the Bible,* comments on this as follows:

"Human responsibility was the law that Cain broke: his surly remark, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' has come echoing down the ages, and re-

ceived a final answer in our Lord's parable of the Good Samaritan. The rebellious element in Cain's nature has made him a hot favorite with many poets, who turned him into a hero of drama, Byron's *Cain* arousing the attention of Europe. But Cain was really no hero, he was simply very human. He seems more real than his mild brother. Cain's descendants were important pioneers; the murderer Lamech had three sons—Jabal, the cowboy; Jubal, the musician; Tubal-Cain, the smith. It is pleasant to see, so early in history, music placed on an apparent equality with more 'useful' and philistine work.''

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Each student should remember the substance of the Bible passages and be able to locate the passages from memory.

Tell the story of the Serpent in the Garden in dialogue form. Who are the speakers in the dialogues? Write dialogue II in your notebooks.

Is Gen. 3 prose or poetry? Compare two lines of Gen. 3:14 with Psalm 2:10 and note one thing which makes us call them poetry.

Is Gen. 3 a bit of literal history like Sam. 9, or like one of the parables of Jesus?

Why is the Serpent an appropriate symbol of temptation?

What consequence of the sin in the garden do you regard as most terrible?

Give the outline of the story of Cain and Abel and tell why the author inserted that at this point.

What verse in this story is most often quoted, and what principle is involved in it?

Chapter IV

THE GREAT FLOOD

Primitive Account of the Flood. Parts of Genesis 6-8. Older Babylonian Story, in the Epic of Gilgamesh.

1. The Earlier Account of the Flood.

We get a clearer and more consistent story of the flood if we select the following verses only, from Genesis, chapters six to eight: 6:5-8; 7:1-5, 10, 16b, 17, 22, 23; 8:6-12, 20-22. The remaining verses of these chapters also give a complete story of the flood which differs in some points from the primitive version. For example, Gen. 7:24 gives the length of the flood as 150 days, while the older account in Genesis 7:17 states the time as 40 days.

It is evident that there are two accounts of the flood woven together in these chapters. This is explained by the fact that early history in the Bible was based on records written at different times and in different places. In Judah about 850 B. C. a history was written which we call J because it used the name of Jehovah for God. About four hundred years later another history was written which we call P because it is chiefly interested in the priests and their laws. Later, when our present Pentateuch was completed, these separate histories were brought together. This habit of combining different histories into one explains why inconsistencies often appear in the narrative.

2. Babylonian Flood Story.

The Babylonians had an account of the Flood which has been preserved for us in a long poem which they called the Gilgamesh Epic. Rogers, in his *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament,* says in substance, that this epic is the most beautiful and most extensive poem which has been preserved to us from the literature of the ancient Babylonians. It consisted originally of twelve large tablets, many of which have been broken and parts lost. In the form in which we have it, the poem dates from about 650 B. C., but it contains long passages written as early as 2000 B. C.

The following quotations from the Babylonian story of the flood will suffice to enable the student to make a comparison with the biblical account:

"O Gilgamish, I will tell thee a wonderful story.
Thou knowest the city of Shurippak on the Euphrates?
It was corrupt, and the gods decided to destroy it with a flood.
Ea, the god of wisdom, confided their plans to me.
'Thou man of Shurippak, build a ship;
Forsake thy wealth and save thy life.
Take living beasts of every kind into the ship.
Measure its proportions well, and into the sea shalt launch it.'"

. . . . . .

"The god Shamash appointed a season and said:
'In the night I will cause the heavens to rain;
Enter the ship and close the door.'
The evening of which he spoke came;
I watched the approaching storm;
I entered the ship and closed the door. . . . . .
The deluge covered the surface of the earth. . . . . .
In a single day it rose above the mountains,
And like a battle it rushed upon the people.
A brother heeded not his brother;
Men would not help each other.
Six days and nights passed;

The wind and storm were overwhelming.
On the seventh day at dawn, the wind ceased;
The storm, which had smitten the earth like an earthquake, was quieted.
I looked out upon the sea;
All mankind had turned to clay;
Like reeds their corpses floated on the water.
Grieved, I sat down to weep.''

. . . . . .

''When the seventh day approached,
I sent forth a dove and let her go.
The dove flew away and came back,
For there was no resting place and she returned,
I sent forth a swallow and let her go,
The swallow flew away and came back,
For there was no resting place and she returned.
I sent forth a raven and let her go,
The raven flew away, she saw the abatement of the waters,
She drew near, she waded, she croaked and came not back.
Then I sent everything forth to the four quarters of heaven, I offered sacrifice;
I made a libation upon the mountain's peak.
The gods smelt the savor,
The gods smelt the sweet savor,
The gods gathered like flies over the sacrificer.''

3. Comparison of the Hebrew and Babylonian Accounts of the Flood.

The Babylonian account as a whole compared with Genesis shows many close parallels. Note the following: the building of a ship or ark with stories; animals and people enter the ark, and the door is closed; the destruction of all living things by a great flood; the sending forth of a dove and a raven, the offering of sacrifices after disembarking; the gods smell the sweet savor; the promise that mankind will never again be destroyed by a flood.

This likeness does not prove that Genesis borrowed its account from the Babylonians, but rather shows that both records of the flood grew up in the same great section of the world in the same

general period of human history. The real explanation of the likeness is that the Babylonian language was the language of diplomacy like the French of modern times. Ideas current in one part of the ancient world were carried everywhere and in this way Hebrew writers would learn the story.

Dr. Banks, in his *The Bible and the Spade*, explains the connection between the two accounts as follows: "It is often stated that the Hebrews borrowed the story from the Babylonians, or that the Babylonians borrowed it from the Hebrews, yet it can hardly be said that one can borrow that which is one's own. Babylonia was the birthplace of the Hebrews; the scenes of the first two thousand years of their history were along the Euphrates, and the stories of the creation, of the Garden of Eden and of the deluge, belonged to them as much as to the Babylonians. The stories of King Alfred belong not only to the English; they belong also to the English colonists wherever they have gone. Thus Babylonian history and literature, until the days of Abraham, was the only history and literature the Hebrews had. It is then not correct to say that the Hebrews borrowed the story from the Babylonians; it was the story of their own people, the story they carried with them when they left their native land to cross the desert."

The differences are more important than the likenesses of the flood stories. The Scripture account rises above the degrading polytheism of Babylonia, whose angry gods caused the flood, and describes the God of Heaven sorrowfully punishing a wicked generation for the sake of the future good of the race. The character of Noah is also an exalted one

and found worthy of a place in that wonderful gallery of pictures of men of faith in Hebrews 11. The Bible record is far superior both morally and religiously to the parallel record in Babylonia.

4. The Lesson Material.

These three accounts of the Flood (J, P, and the Babylonian) suggest many interesting lines of study. It is important first of all for the student to note the fundamental agreement in the thought of all these writers. If one would prepare a table of the parallels in the three narratives as follows it would be instructive:

J	P	Babylonian
Gen. 6:5-8	Gen. 6:9-13	Line 3
7:1-5	6:14-22	Lines 5-7
7:10	7:11	13-15
7:22, 23	7:18-21	26, 27
8:20-22	9:18-17	39, 40.

Another interesting fact is the new method of the biblical authors at this point. The editor of Genesis six to nine has interwoven verses from J and P and has made a composite narrative. In the earlier chapters the editor chose complete sections from J and P, as we saw in the chapter on the Creation.

5. The Teachings of this Ancient Story.

(1) Evil works its own ruin. See Gen. 6:5.
(2) The worth of faith. Hebrews 11:7.
(3) Safety lies in obedience. Gen. 6:22.
(4) God's willingness to give the race a new start. Gen 8:1, 16, 17.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Make a table of the parallels among the three accounts of the Flood as suggested in point 4, writing in your notebooks, opposite the references, the substance of the verses.

Test the statement in paragraph I by omitting the verses cited from chapters 6 to 8 and then see if a complete story of the Flood remains.

Find three evidences in chapters six to eight that the narrative was compiled from two original accounts of the Flood.

Name half a dozen likenesses between the Hebrew and Babylonian stories.

What is the best explanation of this similarity in the accounts?

Why is the biblical account so much loftier in its view of God and man?

Are there any fundamental principles of life on which both the Hebrew and Babylonian accounts agree?

Part 2
LITERARY SELECTIONS WITH A PATRIARCHAL BACKGROUND

Chapter V

SKETCHES FROM THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM

The Migration of Abraham. Genesis 12:1-9.
The Peace Pact. Genesis 13:1-12.
The Flight of Hagar. Genesis 16:1-13.
The Name Abram Changed to Abraham. Genesis 17:1-16.

1. The New Stage in the Literature.

When we reach the twelfth chapter of Genesis we enter a new literary field. Genesis 1 to 11 consisted of primitive narratives based on ancient traditions that dealt with the origin of the world and of mankind, while the Abraham stories and all the records to the end of Genesis confine their attention to the Hebrew race. These stories glorifying the beginnings of the Chosen People were told orally for a long period before they were reduced to writing.

2. The Great Adventure of Abraham.

Ur of the Chaldees, where Abraham was born nearly four thousand years ago, was even then a very old city, as old as London now is. Recent discoveries among the ruins of Ur enable us to imagine quite fully the life of the boy who became the founder of the Hebrew race. There were grand temples built of brick, substantial houses, wholesale and retail shops, business streets and wharves along

the canal where freight boats and passengers boats made their calls at regular intervals. Outside the city were fields and pastures. Abraham's father was the owner of some of these, and he was rich in flocks and herds.

The boy's future prospects were very bright, but he was not contented to stay among the old familiar scenes. An inner voice told him (12:1) that something awaited him in the great world beyond. With his father he went from Ur to Haran, and from there Abram pushed on to Palestine. He was not an old man as one might think from the age given in 12:4. The Bible reckons ages on a different basis from that now in use, although scholars have not yet discovered that basis. There is nothing to show that human life was longer then than now, and Abraham gives all the evidences of having been a young man still.

Abraham's call to a great service has many parallels in English literature. One of the best is Kipling's *The Explorer*.

'Til a voice as bad as conscience, rang interminable changes
On one everlasting Whisper day and night repeated—so:
Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look behind the ranges—
Something lost behind the ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go.

. . . .

Then I knew, the while I doubted—knew His hand was certain o'er me.
Still—it might be self-delusion—scores of better men had died—
I could reach the township living, but . . . . . He knows what terrors tore me . . . .
But I didn't . . . . but I didn't . . . . I went down the other side.

. . . . . .

Anybody might have found it, but His whisper came to me.

3. The Peace Pact between Abraham and Lot.

Increasing wealth brought on trouble between the uncle and his nephew. While comparatively poor they had lived in peace together, but with increasing flocks and herds quarrels became common, and finally it seemed wise to Abraham that a separation should take place. When one reads this incident he should observe the writer's evident aim to call attention to the generosity of Abraham and the selfishness of Lot. He seems to take delight in adding verse 13, which forbodes punishment for the selfish Lot.

The meanness of Lot and the generosity of Abraham had a great effect on their descendants. The hilly and less fertile lands of Abraham developed a hardy race, and their descendants became the founders of the Hebrew nation; while the easy life in the plain and the proximity of Sodom with its harmful pleasures ruined the family of Lot. It is thought that the tribes of Ammon and Moab descended from Lot, and that their inferiority both in industry and morals resulted from their unfortunate location. It may be hard to decide whether environment is more influential than heredity, but certainly in this case the biblical author is interested in showing the power for evil of a bad environment.

4. The Flight of Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian Slave-girl.

According to the marriage customs of the East a master could marry any one of his own female slaves, but not a slave who happened to belong to his wife. Now the wife of Abraham had a maid-servant by the name of Hagar whom she urged

Abraham to marry in order that he might have a son to perpetuate the family name, for Sarah had no children. When Hagar became the mother of the first-born son of Abraham, she showed her pride to her mistress, and this made her offensive to Sarah. Sarah made complaint to Abraham and he told her to do what she liked with the servant. Sarah then treated Hagar so harshly that she took her son and fled into the desert toward her old Egyptian home.

As Hagar rested by a spring in the desert, an angel told her to return to her mistress and promised that her son should become the ancestor of an unnumbered people. The Arabs today claim to be descended from Ishmael, and the Mohammedan religion sprang from that source. "Little did Sarah think when she persuaded Abraham to take Hagar that she was originating a rivalry which has run with keenest animosity through all ages, which oceans of blood have not quenched."

5. The Name Abram changed to Abraham.

Marcus Dods in his valuable commentary on the Book of Genesis (The Expositor's Bible) suggests that Abram was losing his high ideal for the future when this new vision came to him reminding him that he was a "father of nations" and that Sarah was a "princess," and that she would bear a son who should be his true heir. He writes: Abraham "had learned to love the bold, brilliant, domineering boy (Ishmael). He saw how the men liked to serve him and how proud they were of the young chief. . . .So that the reminder that he was not the promised heir was not entirely welcome. . . .He could

not suppress the somewhat peevish exclamation: Oh that Ishmael might serve thy turn!....Would that what already exists in actual substance before the eye might satisfy Thee and fulfil Thine intention and supersede the necessity of further waiting!.... Must I cut my moorings and launch again on this ocean of faith with a horizon always receding and that seems absolutely boundless?" We now can see what a loss it would have been to the world if Abraham's mission had been left for Ammon and Moab rather than the Hebrew descendants of Isaac and Jacob to fulfil. There is no certain explanation of the different forms for the names Sarah and Abraham, but the author uses the later forms of the names to indicate a new stage of God's revelation of his purpose.

6. The Religious Meaning of Abraham's Migration.

If we may judge from Abraham's life after he reached Palestine, it was a religious motive that led him to leave the safety and comforts of his homeland. Wherever he went he built altars and prayed. He established a better type of religious life than that to which he was accustomed in his youth, and the world has felt the influence of the movement which he inaugurated. Marcus Dods says of him: "With Abraham there opens a new chapter in the history of the race; a chapter of the profoundest significance. The consequences of Abraham's movements and beliefs have been limitless and enduring. All succeeding time has been influenced by him."

It may not be too much to say that Abraham's family had the same motive that inspired the Pilgrim Fathers, who left their native land to found

communities where men could worship God under better conditions than obtained in the old world.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Contrast Genesis 12 to 50 with Genesis I to II with reference to the contents and the literary form.

Tell the story of Abraham's migration together with a brief description of his home in Ur.

Compare "God's whisper" in Kipling's The Explorer with Abraham's call in Genesis 12.

Tell the story of Lot's choice of the best lands, according to Genesis 13, and bring out by your way of telling it the motive of the author.

Discuss the ethical value of the struggle for life in a country like the uplands of Palestine and the highlands of Scotland.

What was the origin of the Ishmaelites? Was Abraham religious?

Chapter VI

TWO CHAPTERS FROM THE LIFE OF ISAAC

The Offering of Isaac. Genesis 22:I-19.
An Oriental Courtship. Genesis 24.

1. Introduction. The Authorship and Certain Peculiarities of the Oriental Setting of these Stories.

The name of the author who wrote the remarkable story of the rescue of Isaac has been lost, but he is known as the Elohist because he preferred the name Elohim for God, and his designation in modern books is E. He wrote in Ephraim or Northern Israel after Elijah had done his great work, and perhaps during the time of the activity of the prophet Amos, about 750 B. C. He was greatly influenced by the prophets toward higher ethical and religious ideals than his predecessor, the historian J, had shown. For example, J had written a hundred years earlier the statement that Abraham had told a lie (Genesis 12:13-18). E explained that Abraham had not really lied because Sarah was indeed his sister, the daughter of Abraham's father, though not of his mother (Genesis 20:12).

So also in the story of the Offering of Isaac in Genesis 22 the author E has for his main purpose the correcting of a great error. The sacrifice of human beings was a familiar form of religious worship amongst the neighbors of Israel (See 2 Kings 3:27). Even the Hebrews practised it to some extent (Judges 11:39;2 Kings 16:3). Abraham evi-

dently came to believe it to be his duty to sacrifice Isaac, but E states (Gen. 22, 11) that a voice from heaven forbad it.

The author of the courtship of Rebekah was J, whose characteristics were discussed in Chapter 2. Bewer says of him: "He is an acknowledged master of story-tellers. His literary art is exquisite. Fresh, lifelike, concrete, and graphic, the persons are sketched with the sureness of a great artist, the stories move swiftly and are full of interest. No wonder that they have delighted the readers of more than two milleniums."

This story of an oriental courtship has for its setting well-known customs of the nomads of the desert: the seeking of a wife from a kindred tribe; the confidence reposed in an old slave; and the negotiations that led up to marriage. He who studies these stories is not only adding to his religious and literary culture, but is also making himself at home in the ancient world, in other words, becoming a citizen of the world.

2. The Story of the Offering of Isaac.

The dramatic skill of the writer appears in the swiftness of movement and in the increasing interest of each successive scene. Tell the story with the following outline as a guide:

The startling command to Abraham, vv. 1, 2.
The solemn journey to Mt. Moriah, vv. 3, 4.
Preparations for the sacrifice of Isaac, vv. 5-10.
The voice from heaven, vv. 11-14.
The reward of Abraham's obedience, vv. 15-19.

Study the narrative for examples of pathos, simplicity, swiftness of movement, the lifelike sketching of persons, and the element of surprise.

Greek literature has a parallel to this story in the offering of Iphigenia by Agamemnon. To propitiate the angry goddess Artemis, who had becalmed the Greek fleet, Agamemnon was about to sacrifice his beautiful daughter Iphigenia, when the goddess unexpectedly substituted a doe as an acceptable offering.

3. An Oriental Courtship.

An attractive method of presenting this story is to arrange it in seven scenes as follows.

Scene 1

The Servant's Oath, Gen. 24:1-10

Place: Abraham's tent in Hebron.

Characters: Abraham, aged and ill, lying upon a couch of skins; the trusted servant, kneeling before Abraham; several attendants, outside the tent door.

Abraham says: Swear that you will not take a wife for Isaac from the Canaanites, but from my own kindred in Haran.

Servant: What if the maiden will not return with me to this land?

Abraham: Then you are free from the oath. But God will send his angel before you.

(The servant sets forth with a caravan of ten camels and attendant slaves to the valley of the Euphrates.)

Scene 2

The Meeting with Rebekah, 11-28

Place: The ancient well of Nahor, near the old stone house of Laban, brother of Rebekah.

Characters: The trusted servant, standing beside his kneeling camels; Rebekah, the beautiful young sister of Laban.

The servant speaks: Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water from the pitcher.

Rebekah: Drink, my lord. For the camels also I will draw water from the well.

Servant: (presents Rebekah with gold earrings and bracelets) Whose daughter are you? Is there room in your father's house for us to lodge tonight?

Rebekah: I am of the family of Nahor. We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in.

Scene 3

Oriental Hospitality, 29-33

Place: The homestead of Nahor.

Characters: Laban, the servant, and Rebekah.

Laban: Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without? For I have prepared the house, and room for the camels. (Laban then pours water on the feet of his guest, and sets food before him.)

Servant: I will not eat, until I have told mine errand.

Scene 4

Marriage Negotiations, 34-54

Place: Dining room of the house.

Characters: The same as in Scene 3.

Servant: My master made me swear, saying,

thou shalt go unto my father's house and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son. I covenanted with Jehovah that he should show me the maiden by the sign that she should give both me and my camels water at the well. And before I had done speaking in my heart behold Rebekah came. And now, if you will give the maiden in marriage to my master's son, tell me.

Laban: The thing proceedeth from the Lord. Behold Rebekah is before thee; take her and go. (The dowry gifts are then presented, and a feast is held.)

Scene 5

The Journey to Palestine, 55-61

Place: Caravan road from Haran to Hebron.

Characters: Mother of Rebekah, the trusted servant and Rebekah.

Rebekah's mother: Let Rebekah stay with us a few days; after that she may go.

Servant: Make no delay; my master is old and infirm; he may not live to see the bride.

The mother: We will ask Rebekah, and let her decide. (To Rebekah) Wilt thou go with this man?

Rebekah: I will go.

The family: (Gathered around for the farewell) Blessed be thou, Rebekah, and be thou the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them. (Rebekah and her nurse mount the camels and start with the trusted servant on the long journey.)

Scene 6

Meeting of the Betrothed, 62-66

Place: A field at Beer-lahai-roi. (Abraham died in the absence of the servant, and Isaac had moved to the place named.)

Characters: Isaac, Rebekah and other members of the caravan.

Rebekah: (Seeing a man dressed like a person of importance walking toward them, she alighted from the camel, thinking it probable that it was her future husband.) What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us?

The servant: It is my master Isaac. (Rebekah puts on her veil, for Isaac must not see her face, according to the custom of good society, until they are man and wife.)

Scene 7

Place: The tent of Isaac's mother

Characters: Rebekah, Isaac, and the trusted servant.

(The servant reports to Isaac the success of his mission.)

The servant: God has prospered me according to the prayer of thy father Abraham.

Isaac: Blessed be the Lord who has sent to me Rebekah, one of our own kindred.

(Isaac takes Rebekah to the tent that had belonged to Sarah, and she became his wife, and he was comforted after his father's death.)

Who can see the green earth any more
As she was by the sources of time?
Who thinks as they thought,
The tribes who then roamed on her breast,
Her vigorous primitive sons?
What girl
Now reads in her bosom as clear
As Rebekah read when she sate
At eve by the palm-shaded well?
Who guards in her breast
As deep, as pellucid a spring
Of feeling, as tranquil, as sure?

—Matthew Arnold.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Discuss and explain the difference in moral standards between the biblical authors J and E.

Name three or four customs, good and bad, that form the background of the two stories in this lesson.

Assign Genesis 22 in advance to some member of the class, asking that the story be told next time as vividly as possible.

Write in your notebooks an estimate of Genesis 22 as a short story. Name and give an example of each point made.

Explain how a custom that seemed good to one generation, like the custom of human sacrifice, becomes a sin to later generations.

Many biblical stories like the Wooing of Rebekah in Genesis 24 have been dramatized in recent years, and classes have put them on the stage in a simple, or more elaborate form. It would stimulate interest in the study of the Bible if that should be done more frequently. This story of Rebekah has been treated thus in this chapter in order to suggest how easily it may be done. Let the class take the parts and read the scenes during class hour, or let them be presented at a more formal occasion, with the parts memorized and the scenes staged. The story as here dramatized may be much lengthened if it is desired.

Commit to memory the quotation from Matthew Arnold, and tell what criticism of modern girlhood seems to be implied.

Chapter VII

JACOB: A CHARACTER STUDY, PART 1

The Birth of the Twins. Genesis 25:19-26.
Jacob Buys the Birthright. Genesis 25:27-34.
Rebekah's Scheme to Steal the Paternal Blessing. Genesis 27:1-29.
Esau's Plea. Genesis 27:30-40.
Jacob's Departure for the East. Genesis 27:41-28:9.
The Vision at Bethel. Genesis 28:10-22.

1. Introduction.

The cycles of stories connected with the names of Jacob and Joseph fill nearly all the last half of Genesis, more than twenty chapters. They are of so great importance to students of literature and religion that four chapters of this book have been devoted to them, and they should be studied thoroughly for three reasons.

First of all, these characters as they stand pictured in the pages of the Bible are so human and lifelike that one meets them in all the great literatures of the world, and they are better known in town and hamlet than many a modern statesman. To be ignorant of these incidents is to cut off one's self from the appreciation of much fine literature, and from an understanding of what is going on in the minds of the common people. W. H. Bennett writes as follows concerning these characters in the *New Century Bible*: "Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph are no mere shadowy visions, but familiar friends, more real to many than the statesmen and generals of our own day....The Patriarchs appeal to us, interest and help us, because they are types of classes

of men; their adventures. . . .still stand as vivid pictures and symbols of crises in human life today. . . . There have been many Jacobs, who have, so to speak, stumbled into the Divine Presence, when their only thought was of headlong flight from the consequences of weakness, folly, and sin; many Josephs, too, who have found in humiliating ruin the appointed pathway to honourable service. . . .It is the human, the representative character of these narratives that has preserved them, and procured for them a place in Scripture."

Second, these narratives should be studied as pure literature. In many respects they are unsurpassed in the writings of the world. Gardiner (*The Bible as English Literature*, pp. 34, 35) says: "All the narrative of the Bible shows a combination of two sets of qualities: on the one hand it has a simplicity and a limpid and vivid clearness which make it appeal to all sorts and conditions of men; on the other hand through its whole range it has an under-current of strong feeling. . . .For swiftness, for the unerring sense of effective detail, these stories are our standard in English." One who reads and rereads these narratives may come to appreciate as Ruskin and Lincoln did the "grand style" of the Bible, and may possibly acquire a better literary style of his own.

In the third place, the moral value of these descriptions is very high. The prophetic historians J and E knew the value of the story in religious education; and while in these stories there are elements that belong to a lower stage of development than that to which we have attained, yet they so powerfully picture the sorrows of sin and the rewards of

virtue that they still hold their place in the field of education.

2. The Lesson Material.

The six incidents listed at the head of this chapter should be studied both as separate units and as a connected series, for each is an interesting story in itself, and there is also a logical connection running through them all.

One sure method of mastering this material is to write a brief paraphrase of each incident, keeping in mind all the time the great difference between Esau and Jacob. "The first was born, all over like a hairy garment, presenting the appearance of being rolled up in a fur cloak or the skin of an animal.... when their son appeared in this guise the parents could not but fear that it prognosticated his sensual, animal career. So they called him Esau. And so did the younger son from the first show his nature, catching the heel of his brother, as if he were striving to be firstborn."

An example of what a student might write in his notebook as a paraphrase of Genesis 25:27-34 is given at this point as a suggestion to be followed in treating the other incidents in the life of Jacob. While Jacob is stirring a pot of lentil stew over the fire, Esau comes wearily in. He has been long hours in the open in a vain hunt for game, and he is very hungry. Sniffing the tempting soup he begs, Let me eat some of that red stew for I am faint. But Jacob said, First sell me your birthright. Esau replied, I am ready to die of faintness, so of what use will the birthright be to me. Swear to me, said Jacob, that for this mess of pottage you

will sell me the birthright. Esau made the required oath, and so sold his privilege as eldest son, and then ate his fill of bread and stew, careless of the future.

3. Explanatory Notes.

The name Jacob means "heel-holder," and is interpreted in Gen. 27:36 to mean one who tries to supplant another.

Esau is a play on the Hebrew word "hairy." The Greek word Esau means profane. "Esau was a profane person, an open and bare character, unfenced and unhallowed, no guardian angels at the doors."

The law of the birthright is given in Deut. 21:15-17. By it the oldest son became the head of the family and had the largest share of the property. A parallel to the biblical incident of the birthright is the sale of a birthright in Arabia, in the city of Mecca. A descendant of Ishmael sold for a bottle of wine the keys to the temple at Mecca, and with them guardianship of the temple, which had been his by right of birth.

Two views of Rebekah. "A selfish, ambitious, woman playing her favorite son with meanest deception against her older child and against her blind and aged husband."

She was a bright, forward, far-seeing mother who knew that Jacob would be a better head of the family and of the tribe in days to come, and took what seemed to her the necessary means to bring about the desired end. She did wrong and was punished for it, but she meant well.

Genesis 27:36 harmonizes the apparent inconsistency of using two explantions of the way in which the younger brother obtained the birthright. The

two stories originally circulated independently and were so interesting that both were preserved when Genesis was compiled.

4. The Religious Meaning of the Vision at Bethel. On his lonely way to exile in the east the fugitive stayed over night at Bethel, where the peculiar formation of the rocks evidently suggested the "ladder" in his dream. He saw a flight of steps leading to heaven, and angels ascending and descending, and at the top was God looking down on the young man, who was so capable of doing wrong and yet so capable of lofty religious visions. None so lonely, none so sinful that God cannot be near to help.

> "The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
> Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.
> The angels keep their ancient places:—
> Turn but a stone, and start a wing."

Does the fact that the angels first "ascended," according to the story, indicate that the divine help is always by our side, and that we need not call aloud to Heaven to send down mercy from above?

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Write in your notebooks two or more reasons why a student of literature should master the Jacob and Joseph stories.

Look through the six incidents in the life of Jacob in this chapter to see evidences that the authors intentionally used these stories for the purposes of moral and religious education.

Write a paraphrase of Esau's plea in your notebooks.

State how the six incidents are connected as a part of a plot.

What is your view of Rebekah's part in the incident of the birth-right?

If Esau was more affectionate, generous, and forgiving than Jacob, why is he not on the whole regarded as the better man?

How were Rebekah and Jacob punished for their sin?

What is the lesson of Jacob's ladder?

Chapter VIII

JACOB: A CHARACTER STUDY, PART 2

The meeting of Jacob and Rachel. Genesis 29:1-14.
Jacob deceived by Laban. Genesis 29:15-30.
Laban deceived by Jacob. Genesis 30:25-43.
The flight from Haran. Genesis 31:1-21.
The truce at Mizpah. Genesis 31:22-55.
The struggle at the Jabbok. Genesis 32:3-32.
Jacob and Esau reconciled. Genesis 33:1-17.

1. The Change of Scene in Jacob's Life.

Jacob spent his early years in the vicinity of Hebron in the south of Palestine. His mother, doubtless, had often told him of her old home in Haran in Mesopotamia, and perhaps had described the old family well where she had offered hospitality to the trusted servant of Abraham, and had watered his camels. It was this well and the old stone house on the hill above, where his mother had lived as a girl, that made Haran seem a friendly shelter after his long journey from the South.

Here he finds Rachel, here Joseph is born, and here also he gains wealth. After a period of twenty years or so he becomes dissatisfied with Laban's treatment of him and decides to return to Palestine. After many strange experiences he returns and is reconciled with Esau.

2. The Lesson Material.

The task of learning to tell these stories will not seem difficult to those who adopt the following plan: (1) Find the chief point of interest in each of the

seven incidents. In the first, it is perhaps the love-scene between Rachel and Jacob. In the second, it is the curious oriental custom of marriage. In the third, it might be Jacob's success in outwitting the shrewd and selfish Laban. We may enjoy Jacob's victory, although we cannot approve of his methods. In the fourth the sudden flight of Jacob with all his possessions after twenty years of work on Laban's estate, without saying anything about it to Laban, awakens the curiosity of the reader. The scene at Mizpah gave rise to the modern "Mizpah Benediction," but the scene itself was anything but devotional. The struggle at the Jabbok is the most dramatic of the incidents, because of the all-night struggle with the angel; and the reconciliation between the brothers after twenty years of absence has its own appeal to the reader.

(2) The teacher and the class should together work out a brief analysis of each of the stories, and the analysis should be written in the notebooks for later use. The usefulness of the analysis will be increased if it is brief and suggestive of the pictures in the story. The following example may be helpful. The first narrative, 29:1-14, naturally divides itself into the following sections:

The wayworn traveller reaches the historic well and sees flocks lying around it, 1-3.
His conversation with the shepherds, 4-9.
Love at first sight, 10-12.
Jacob made welcome in the house of Laban, 13, 14.

(3) Find a good or bad characteristic of Jacob in each of the seven incidents.

3. The problem of Jacob's character.

Hutchins, in his *Religious Experience of Israel,* is

too critical of Jacob. He describes him as utterly unscrupulous as a son; as a brother, he takes advantage of the weakness of Esau and is utterly selfish; as an employee, he is no more attractive, being very crafty and skilful in cheating. This author is also skeptical regarding the sincerity of Jacob in relion. He says of him, frightened by Esau's approach, "The mean little supplanter cannot cheat God. No trick will serve him now."

This estimate of Jacob fails to take into consideration that his mother was responsible for his early disloyalty to his father and brother. History and the New Testament have placed a higher value on Jacob's life. The New Testament gives him a place among the heroes of the faith in Hebrews 11, and his place in history as the father of the twelve tribes of Israel is secure. There must be elements, then, in his character worthy of imitation. He denied himself immediate pleasures for the sake of a larger good in the future; he early had a religious experience which showed a nature capable of lofty ideals; his love for Rachel and faithfulness to her reveal a good heart; his patience and persistence were worthy of the reward which he obtained.

It is only fair to remember that Jacob lived nearly four thousand years ago and that he should be judged by the standards of his own time. His sharp bargain with Laban, his failure to bid him good-bye after twenty years of service with him, and many other faults and sins in his life were much more common at that time than now. Jacob's deep religious experience at the Jabbok and his reconciliation with Esau show him to have had real depth of character.

It should not be a matter of surprise that there are two natures in a man like Jacob. There is a Doctor Jekyl and Mr. Hyde in almost every person, and the evil in us is always striving for supremacy over the good. It is probable that if we had insight enough we should see Jacobs all around us today.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Trace on a map of Western Asia the journeys of Jacob as a background for the understanding of the incidents of his life.

Write in your notebooks a brief analysis of each of the seven incidents, and be prepared to tell the incident when the title is mentioned.

It would be well to arrange at a previous session of the class for a debate on the character of Jacob. One member of the class should be assigned to the task of defending Jacob's character, while another assails it.

Chapter IX

THE BIOGRAPHY OF JOSEPH, PART 1

The egotistical boy in Hebron. Genesis 37:1-11.
Joseph in the pit at Dothan. Genesis 37:12-24.
Joseph sold as a slave. Genesis 37:25-36.
Rapid promotion in Potiphar's service. Genesis 39:1-6.
Resists temptation and is thrown into prison. Genesis 39:7-20.
An optimist in prison. Genesis 39:21-40:23.
Excels the magicians of Egypt. Genesis 41:1-36.
Made prime minister. Genesis 41:37-57.
Forgives his brothers. Genesis chs. 42-44.
Loyal to his family. Genesis chs. 45-47.

1. Introduction. More Biography and Less Fiction.

In a day when fiction, and to a large extent fiction not worthy to read, fills our libraries, we need to be reminded that life's best lessons come from biography.

> "Lives of great men all remind us
> We can make our lives sublime."

Hagedorn's *Life of Roosevelt* and Palmer's *Life of Alice Freeman Palmer* are examples of fascinating books that have stirred the ambition of many a boy and girl. When the advice of parents and teachers falls on dull ears, a book like Mary Antin's *Promised Land* or Franklin's *Autobiography* may awaken youth to the great interests of life.

It has been said that the four greatest biographies in English are Boswell's *Life of Johnson,* Lockhart's *Life of Scott,* Trevelyan's *Life of Macaulay,* and Franklin's *Autobiography.* While the biography of

Joseph in Genesis is very brief, yet it is "unequalled in any literature sacred or profane, in ancient or modern times, for its simplicity, its pathos, its dramatic power, and its sustained interest." When you add to that the fact that Joseph is the ideal character of the Old Testament, a dreamer who made his dreams come true, with an experience rich in exploits, you have material of the greatest value in religious education.

2. The Egyptian Background.

The scene of the story in ancient Egypt is strange and exciting enough to be worthy of a place in *The Arabian Nights.* The events of Joseph's life fall in that period of revolution when the Hyksos or the Shepherd tribes invaded Egypt and took possession of the government. The beautiful palaces and temples were taken over from the proud rulers of the Nile valley by these Asiatics who were akin to Joseph. This explains how he could become prime minister and marry the daughter of the high priest. Such a book as the *Spell of Egypt* by Robert Hichens, with its pictures and vivid descriptions, is helpful to the student as he tries to go back in imagination to that ancient time. Whatever one may think concerning the verbal accuracy of the incident, the fact remains that the biblical account of Joseph's career admirably fits into the conditions in Egypt in those days. For example, the description of Joseph's experience in Potiphar's house is true to the life of the times as is proven by a parallel Egyptian story entitled, "The Tale of the Two Brothers."

3. A Rapid Survey of the Career of Joseph.

The best approach to this subject is made by a rapid reading of the whole story by the outline at the head of this chapter. We first see a boy about seventeen years old playing among his father's tents in Hebron. He is a dreamer and a family favorite, and consequently becomes very unpopular with his brothers. No doubt he had been so sheltered from the hard experiences of life that he had become rather priggish.

The author next shows how the self-conceit was taken out of him by a series of remarkable experiences. He is sent sixty miles from home on an errand to his brothers in Dothan. They throw him into a dry well and leave him to die. But one of the brothers, relenting, pulls him out and sells him as a slave to a caravan of traders. After a hard trip of several hundred miles on foot to the Nile delta, he is sold to become a servant in Potiphar's house. Before long, through no fault of his own, he is thrown into prison. The prison is the turning point in his career. From that he goes out to become prime minister of one of the greatest nations on earth, rides in a golden chariot, marries the daughter of the high priest of the realm, and becomes the savior of his people.

4. Joseph's Religion.

Joseph's spotless personal life and noble career were due, according to the story, to a lofty faith in God. Hutchins, in his *The Religious Experience of Israel* has said: "A man's whole life is determined by the God he worships. Joseph's life is

pictured as dominated by a holy, unescapable God. Far from home, in the land of alien deities, whom his contemporaries certainly regarded as alive and powerful; a slave, persumably bereft of his God who ruled alone in Canaan; this man cries: 'How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' In prison, he realizes that his God is with him. In his dream-telling, he thinks of God as revealer. 'Do not interpretations belong to God?....God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace.' Joseph's God, moreover, is master of events. In a very fine passage we hear Joseph say to his brothers: 'As for you, ye meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.' Gen. 50:20. Ever his God stands 'within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.'"

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Review by the help of Chapter I the different kinds of literature in the Old Testament.

Compare the biography of Joseph from the point of view of its literary form and lofty thought with any modern book of biography.

In what period in Egyptian history does Joseph's life fall?

The following evidences that the story of Joseph is true to life have been found: An inscription of seven years of famine on a rock in Egypt, a letter written in Egypt stating that a man Joseph was ruler, and a tablet referring to an Asiatic who had control of the stores of corn in Egypt. Name at least two other ways in which the biblical story fits into the historical background.

Tell the whole story of Joseph in outline.

What element in his character contributed most to his success?

Name two evidences that Joseph was a religious man.

Chapter X

THE BIOGRAPHY OF JOSEPH, PART 2

Pharaoh's dream. Genesis 41:1-36.
The ten brothers before the governor. Genesis 42:1-26.
The hidden cup. Genesis 44:1-17.
Judah's plea. Genesis 44:18-34.
Joseph reveals his identity. Genesis 45:1-15.
Joseph forgives his brothers. Genesis 50:14-21.

1. Some Literary Values of this Biography.

As we turn from the general outline of the story of Joseph, which occupied our attention in the last chapter, to a study of particular features of the narrative, exchanging the telescope for the microscope, we have an experience comparable to that of the student of forestry when he puts a cross section of a tree under the microscope. The forest in general was interesting, but the section of wood minutely studied reveals rare and unexpected wonders of form and color. So the particular scenes in the life of Joseph when carefully studied, show remarkable beauty of form and thought.

Hutchins declares that "the vividness of the portraiture can scarcely be matched in literature." William Lyon Phelps says of one of these little scenes (Judah's plea), "There is no recognition scene in Greek drama finer than this." Julius A. Bewer describes the extraordinarily fine grouping of the incidents into a unified picture, and asserts that the whole "is a well-knit novel, finely conceived and worked out." George Matheson, in his

Representative Men of the Bible, writes concerning the relation of the parts to the whole: "Those who are conversant with music tell us that each of Chopin's Preludes has three parts, which embody a distinct sequence. In the first, the melody is free and unrestrained. In the second, it seems to move through tangled places—to be impeded in its way by the intervention of resisting elements. But in the third, the melody comes out into the open once more; the tangles vanish, the impediments are removed, and the notes of the first part reappear in a new connection and with a fresh power. Now, this is precisely the music which I find in the life of Joseph."

2. Suggestions for the Study of a Particular Scene.

The story of Joseph "has woven itself into the fabric of the thought and literature of the world" so completely that one can hardly afford to be ignorant of any of the incidents in the biblical narrative. But intimate knowledge of such a work of literary art comes only from an intensive study of its parts. For example, one will be rewarded, if he gives hours to the study of the ten brothers in the presence of the governor, Genesis 42:1-26.

First, one should try to visualize the setting of the incident. As the humble and plainly-dressed shepherds reach the capital of Egypt, they are impressed by the elaborate stone buildings that surround the beautiful palace of the Pharaoh, for the treasury department of the government of Egypt in its most prosperous days had a host of clerks and many spacious rooms. When the shepherds are finally admitted to the presence of the governor, whom they do not recognize as their own brother,

they bow their faces to the earth. The governor makes himself strange to them and speaks roughly. He throws them into prison for three days, then calls them back to the office and orders them to bring their youngest brother to him. At this their consciences trouble them and, thinking that Joseph cannot understand their language for he has always spoken to them through an interpreter, they speak to one another about their sin against Joseph, whom they think dead. When Joseph hears this, he can restrain himself no longer, but goes away by himself and weeps.

Again, consider the simplicity and earnestness of the style. The words are short, and there is not an involved sentence. There is scarcely an adjective in the whole narrative, and certainly no rhetorical additions. The action moves rapidly toward the end, and the words and phrases are so chosen that a feeling of sincerity and earnestness fills the mind of the reader.

The art of the writer is seen, also, in the figures of speech which he employs. In this incident the element of suspense is most important, for Joseph with difficulty conceals his emotions and his identity is likely to be discovered at any time. By the use of the dialogue, also, the effect of the description is heightened. A further device is seen in the introduction of numerous crises with dramatic action, like the abrupt departure of Joseph that he may shed tears in private.

Judah's plea is said to contain some of the finest English in our language. One curious feature of it is the use of many monosyllabic words. It is very strong, also, in the element of pathos. But time

would fail us if we should undertake to treat fully all the incidents.

3. Joseph's Philosophy of Life.

This story is cheerful because it has a good end, but its chief attraction is not that it "culminates in brightness, but that the brightness is found to have been produced by the actual clouds of the narrative. This is, I think, a point in which the portrait of Joseph is unique among Old Testament figures. You will find any number of narratives that wind up with the prosperity of their heroes; but I cannot at present recall another in which the trial is found to be a *part* of the prosperity. Noah emerges from the flood into the sunshine; but the flood remains a calamity still. Daniel is saved from the lions; but he is saved by the allaying of their fury. Job gets back his possessions; but he gets them back as a reversal of his adverse circumstances. The case of Joseph is very different. His peculiarity is not that he rises to a pinnacle of earthly splendour; *most* of the Old Testament figures do that. It is that his splendour has come out of his dungeon. We are made to see, to feel, that he would never have been on the pinnacle at all if it had not been for his misfortunes in the valley, that his sunshine has come from his suffering, that the avenue of shade has led him to the palace of light." (Matheson) Joseph was an optimist.

His philosophy of life involved a lofty view of God. When we recall that this narrative was written not later than 700 years before Christ, we are amazed that it grasps a conception of God that is international and ethical (39:9; 50:20), for other peoples still

believed in petty national deities with low standards of moral life.

The scene in which Joseph as a high official in the Egyptian empire forgives his lowly brothers who had been so cruel to him is hardly to be matched in the ancient world. And, as a matter of fact, in the modern world such forgiving love is rare. This alone suffices to give the biography of Joseph great distinction. And the reason which he gives for making love supreme in life compels us to hold Joseph in very high esteem because he associates his personal attitude with the providence of God in history, "You meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." (50:20)

Joseph's preparation to meet the unexpected opportunities of life suggests the duty of keeping the "muscles trained." Who would have thought that the Hebrew boy who washed the front steps of Potiphar's palace, and served as a "trusty" in an Egyptian prison, would become prime minister of one of the two greatest nations on earth and the saviour of his race? So, in our philosophy of life, we must not underestimate the little things, remembering Lowell's advice:

"In life's small things be resolute and great,
To keep thy muscles trained; know'st thou when Fate
Thy measure takes? or when she'll say to thee,
'I find thee worthy, do this thing for me?' "

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Assign in advance a scene in the life of Joseph to each student to be studied according to the method suggested in Point 2.

Write in your notebooks a list of all the scenes in the life of Joseph from Genesis 37 to the end, noting the references to the text.

Quote Professors Phelps and Bewer on the literary value of the descriptions of the incidents in the life of Joseph.

What comparison from the realm of music did Mr. Matheson make?

Name three or more elements in Joseph's philosophy of life.

Part 3

LITERARY SELECTIONS WITH THE BEGINNINGS OF THE NATIONAL HISTORY FOR A BACKGROUND

Chapter XI

THE ROMANCE OF MOSES' MISSION

Rescue and adoption of the babe. Exodus 2:1-10.
His sacrifice for his people. Exodus 2:11-15.
The influence of the Midian experiences. Exodus 2:16-22.
The vision of the burning bush. Exodus 2:22-3:10.
Moses feels unequal to the task. Exodus 3:10-16.
Aaron's part in the great mission. Exodus 4:10-16.
Dialogue between Moses and the Pharaoh. Exodus 5:1-14.

1. Parallels to the Story of Moses.

Many nations have glorified their founders in song and story. The Babylonians told a famous story concerning Sargon, the Persians concerning the Elder Cyrus, and the Romans concerning Romulus and Remus. According to Herodotus, the Elder Cyrus was ordered by the king of the Medes to be exposed and left to die, but the herdsman who should have carried out the king's orders preserved the child's life and brought him up as his son. Later, Cyrus became king and deposed the cruel tyrant.

The Babylonian story is a closer parallel to the story of Moses. It runs as follows:

I am Sargon, the mighty king, the king of Akkad. My mother was of lowly birth; my father I knew not, but my

> father's brother dwelt in the mountains. The city of Azupiranu, on the shore of the Euphrates, was my home, My lowly mother conceived me; in secret she gave me birth; she placed me in a basket of reeds and sealed its cover with bitumen; she laid me in the river, but the river did not drown me. The river bore me along; it carried me to Akki the irrigator. Akki the irrigator rescued me; Akki the irrigator adopted me as his own son; Akki the irrigator made me his gardener, and the goddess Ishtar favored me. . . . . Four years I ruled the country.

The romance of Moses surpasses all these literary parallels both in the historical importance of the character and the literary form of the narrative.

2. The New Era in History and Literature.

In studying the evolution of any great literature we need to keep in mind the experiences of the people whose life the literature describes. We have now reached the third stage of Old Testament literature. The first stage had for its background the primitive history before Abraham; the second stage was the patriarchal period and had the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph for a background. From neither of these first two stages has any written document been handed down to us. It is practically certain that such fascinating stories as The Fall of Man, The Flood, Jacob and Esau, and Joseph floated down from the past in the form of oral traditions and were first put into writing after the time of David.

The third stage brings us nearer to the region of authentic history. It covers the life of Israel from Moses to the entrance into the Promised Land, in round numbers from 1220 to 1160 B. C. Many generations have passed away since Joseph was prime

minister of Egypt. A new king has come to the Egyptian throne and Joseph has been forgotten. The foreign shepherd or Hyksos kings, who welcomed the Israelites to Egypt, have been driven from the country. Ramses II (1292-1225, B. C.) has come to the throne and is oppressing the Hebrews. It was he who commanded that the baby boys of the Israelites be drowned in the river, who oppressed the Israelites by forcing them to labor as slaves, and probably it was he who suffered from the plagues that Moses and Aaron brought on the country. He died in 1220 B. C. and his body was so carefully embalmed and buried in a tomb at Deir el-Bahri that, when in 1881 A. D. the tomb was opened and the winding cloths cut away from the body, it was found to be perfectly preserved. "There in a secret place, beneath a rocky cliff in upper Egypt, safe from the ancient grave robbers and far from the tomb built for him, he had been hiding all these thousands of years." (See Banks—*The Bible and the Spade,* pp. 68-71)

The records of these events in Egypt and of the adventures of the Hebrews from the time of their escape from bondage until they reached the land of Moab were written up by three Hebrew historians whom for convenience we have learned to call J, E, and P. The whole world of scholarship has adopted these terms and students should become familiar with them early in their course of study. J stands for the Jehovist or Jahwist, a writer in Judah, about 850 B. C., who prefers the name Jehovah, when speaking of the Deity, and is the most vivid and picturesque of all the Hebrew historians; E stands for the Elohist, a writer in northern Israel,

about 750 B. C., who prefers the term *'E lohim* (God) for the Deity, and is less brilliant in style than J, and gives prominence to places in northern Israel; P stands for the priestly writer, about 500 B. C., who is chiefly interested in the Temple and the religious ceremonies of the people.

How many writings of Moses these authors found to their hand we have no means of knowing. That Moses did not write the account of his own death is evident, although the Jews at a later day did not hesitate to give him credit even for that. But the differences in style and the apparent contradiction in thought in many parts of the Pentateuch prevent our accepting the theory that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible. J, E, and P may have found lists of places made by Moses, and perhaps some laws such as we find in Exodus 34, and other written memorials of the distant past. They, each in his own way, wrote up the whole history of Israel to their own time. In later years these three histories were combined to form our present early books of the Bible. This explains the two accounts of creation, the two accounts of the flood, and many duplicates and inconsistencies in the narrative.

3. Seven Episodes in the Career of Moses.

These episodes are among the best known stories of the Bible, and need no comment and almost no explanation. The most enjoyable way of studying them is as follows: Prepare a brief statement of the setting of each episode, somewhat as a public reader outlines the circumstances of the story which he is going to tell. The material for this is to be found in Exodus in each case preceding the episode. Then,

with a clear outline of the incident in mind, describe the episode as vividly as possible. In the third place, show how romantic the whole life of Moses was by connecting the episode you have studied with the other adventures in his life.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Discuss some likenesses and differences between the story of Moses' youth and the parallels in other nations.

Name the first three stages in the evolution of Old Testament literature.

How does the third stage differ from the two preceding?

What leading historical facts in Egypt and Israel furnish the background for the literature of the third stage?

Name the three historians of the Hebrews upon whom we depend for our knowledge of this period.

Give the date and one characteristic of each of these three historians.

Since the work of these three historians is no longer in existence, but has been combined into one book, how do we know that there were originally three separate histories?

Write in your notebooks in your own words one of the episodes in the career of Moses, prefixing the appropriate historical setting, and adding the connection of the episode with the rest of the life of Moses.

Make a statement in your notebooks concerning the greatness of Moses giving at least four reasons for regarding him as one of the greatest men that ever lived.

Chapter XII

THE BALLAD OF THE RED SEA

The prose setting. Exodus 11:4-10; 12:29-36.
The ballad. Exodus 15:1-18.

1. Introduction.

The Bible passages which we have studied thus far have been in prose form. This chapter deals with a poem and reminds us that we are dealing with a varied literature. Henry Van Dyke in his *Companionable Books* says: "The true lover of the Bible has an interest in all the elements of its life, as an immortal book. He wishes to discern, and rightly to appreciate the method of its history, the spirit of its philosophy, the significance of its fiction, the power of its eloquence, and the charm of its poetry.....As the worshipper in the Temple would observe the art and structure of the carven beams of cedar and the lily-work on the tops of the pillars, the more attentively because they beautified the house of his God, so the man who has a religious faith in the Bible will study more easily and carefully the literary forms of the book in which the Holy Spirit speaks forever."

The dividing line between poetry and prose in the Bible is in some cases very difficult to distinguish, but in the poem we study in this chapter the difference is very marked. This gives the student a good opportunity for learning several important facts about Hebrew poetry. The characteristic feature of

all Hebrew poetry is called parallelism. The two lines that form a couplet, which is the unit of Hebrew poetry, have a symmetry of thought, expressed usually in one of three forms: synonymous, progressive, and antithetic. All three of these kinds of parallelism are illustrated in Psalm 1. Verse 5 is synonymous,—

> Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment,
> Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

Verse 2 is progressive,—

> But his delight is in the law of Jehovah;
> And on His law doth he meditate, day and night.

Verse 6 is antithetic,—

> For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous;
> But the way of the wicked shall perish.

Other marks of the poetic form may be noted briefly. There is a peculiar system of accents or stresses of the voice which produce a rhythmical effect when the line is read aloud. The Hebrews made little or nothing of rhyme or meter but depended upon rhythm for poetic effects. One other prominent characteristic is the use of verbal images. An example of that is found in verse 8,—

> And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were piled up,
> The floods stood upright as a heap.

2. The Prose Setting.

The story of the ten plagues including the death of the first-born furnishes the historical background of the ballad. From ancient times Egypt had been subject to plagues of insects and pestilences, owing to the unsanitary climate and the dense population. At times the Nile is colored with vegetable matter

so that the water looks like blood. There are plagues of insects which make life almost unbearable for man and beast. Historical records and the biblical stories make it plain that the series of plagues frightened the Egyptians into letting the Hebrews go. Whatever may be said concerning the historical accuracy of the descriptions, this much is certainly true, that the Bible writers forcibly expressed the truth that God helped the Hebrews and punished the Egyptians. The climax came when the angel of death smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt including the heir to the throne. In the night Pharaoh called for Moses and told him that he could let the people go.

The details of this exciting flight into the night, the enslaved clans bearing their household treasures, driving their herds, all the men, women and children laden with gifts from the terrified Egyptians, have been re-lived around the passover tables of the Jews for centuries. Picture the dismay of the children of Israel when the chariots of the Pharaoh are seen coming in pursuit. Moses calm, relying wholly upon God, stands a very superman in contrast to the others who cower like frightened sheep. Both prose and ballad give vivid pictures of the scenes, the comfort of the radiant cloud hiding them from the enemy, their anxiety over the passage of the Nile, the rushing winds sweeping a pathway, the joy of safety at last on the opposite bank, then swift destruction overtaking the gorgeous Egyptian chariots as the floods rush back and bury the proud enemies in their depths. No wonder the prophets use this reminder of God's care in so many of their great orations.

3. The Contents of the Ballad.

Read aloud the ballad, noting that verses 1-10 picture the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, and verses 11-13 describe the character of the God who so wonderfully delivered them; verses 14-18 explain the providential guidance of the Hebrews until they have settled in the promised land.

The first couplet reads as follows:

I will sing unto Jehovah, for he hath triumphed gloriously;
The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

It is likely that this constituted the whole song at the time of the deliverance, and that the women danced as they sang this memorial of their salvation. Rogers in his *History and Literature of the Hebrew People* explains the origin of ballads like this: "Such ballads spring up spontaneously when great deeds of war or great tragedies of life have become known. At once somebody makes a song, somebody unknown, somebody whose name will never be known. He sings it at home to the neighbors. It is learned at once and they who learn it sing it elsewhere. Seldom do they sing it just as the author made it. Often words are changed, sometimes a verse is added. Hundreds of such ballads were made in England before printing became easy and common. Hundreds more were made and printed on sheets of paper and sold on the streets of London after printing presses became common." Among the grand old ballads the noblest, most thrilling, most sonorous is the glorious ballad of Chevy Chase.

Erle Douglas on his milke-white steede
  Most like a baron bold
Rode foremost of his company
  Whose armour shone like gold.

Our English archers bent their bowes,
Their hearts were good and true.
At the first flight of arrowes sent,
Full fore-score Scots they slew.

4. Literary Features of the Ballad.

Driver says of this poem, "The ode of triumph is one of the finest products of Hebrew poetry, remarkable for poetic fire and spirit, picturesque description, vivid imagery, quick movement, effective parallelism, and bright sonorous diction."

Of the three kinds of parallelism mentioned in the introduction, two are found in this poem. Our understanding of the thought depends partly on our ability to answer this question, what has the author accomplished by the use of these parallelisms which he could not have accomplished by the use of prose?

There is a fourth type of couplet in this ballad which has been called stair-like parallelism, where the second line repeats a few words of the first and then adds others. A good example of this is v. 16. Another example is Ps. 121, in which the words "help" and "keep" are used to produce this stair-like effect.

Note also the similes (v. 5), metaphors (v. 12b), and hyperbole (v. 15c). There is more than vivid description in verses like 5 and 8; the words themselves are so chosen that in reading them aloud the very sound of the voice conveys the feeling which the author intended to express.

5. The Religious Message.

Israel's great gift to the world was a belief in one righteous God. That thought is brought out here with great clearness and beauty, especially in verse

2, which is quoted in Isaiah 12:2 and Ps. 118:14.

Another thought which had great value throughout the Old Testament history appears in v.13,—"the people that thou hast redeemed." This conception that God has specially chosen Israel would seem to have been vindicated by history, for this little nation has played a part unsurpassed in the annals of mankind.

The word "loving-kindness" in v. 13 strikes a note which Hosea takes up and uses throughout his prophecy. This element in God's nature receives an emphasis in the Old Testament which has not often been recognized. God is love even in the Old Testament and his providential care of the lives of individuals and groups of people fills many of its pages and it is beautifully expressed in this ballad.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Before beginning the study of an example of poetry in the Bible, review other types suggested by Van Dyke (in the introduction to this chapter), giving examples of the different forms which he mentions.

Discuss Van Dyke's idea of the value of literary study of the Bible for the man of deep religious faith.

Name three or more ways of distinguishing between poetry and prose in the Bible.

What natural phenomena of Egypt make it easier for us to understand the ten plagues which form a historical background for this lesson?

Describe the historical event of which the modern Jewish Passover is a memorial.

Write a report in your notebook of a conversation with some Jew on the customs of observing Passover today. If possible bring some unleavened bread.

What are the three sub-divisions of the main thought of the Ballad of the Red Sea?

What was the occasion of the writing of the first couplet?

Describe the origin of ballads like this, and name a parallel in English literature.

List the couplets of the ballad according to the kinds of parallelism.

Write in your notebooks a simile and metaphor besides those mentioned in the chapter.

Find lines in the ballad that express dramatic action and rapid movement.

What is the most valuable religious idea of the Ballad of the Red Sea?

Chapter XIII

THE BEGINNINGS OF HEBREW LAW

A primitive court of law. Exodus 18:13-27.
An example of the first written laws. Exodus 34:17-26.
The Decalogue in Exodus. Exodus 20:3-17.
The Decalogue in Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy 5:7-21.
The picture of the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. Exodus 19:10-25.

1. The Discovery of the Law Code of Hammurabi.

The oldest body of laws in existence was discovered in Susa, the ancient Persepolis, by a French expedition, in the winter of 1901-2. This discovery was of intense interest to the whole Christian world because these laws of Hammurabi, written approximately a thousand years before Moses, were in some cases practically identical with the laws of Moses. Like the code of Moses, they claimed to be inspired, for at the upper end of the front side of the rock on which they were written is a sculptured bas-relief representing the King Hammurabi receiving his laws from the sun-god, Shamash. At the end of the inscription we find these words of the king, which reveal the good motives he had in preparing these regulations for the life of his people in Babylonia:

> "That the strong may not injure the weak, in order to protect the widow and orphans, I have in Babylon....in order to bespeak justice in the land, to settle all disputes, and heal all injuries, set up these my precious words, written upon my memorial stone, before the image of me, as king of righteousness."

The likeness both in form and substance is seen by comparison of the following Babylonian and biblical laws.

Hammurabi 14	Exodus 21:16
If a man has stolen the young son of a freeman, he shall be put to death.	And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.
Hammurabi 195	**Exodus 21:15**
If a man has struck his father, one shall cut off his hand.	He that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death.

These likenesses mean that the Babylonian laws were known far and wide, and that the Hebrews in compiling their own system made use of them. This parallel "helps us to realize that the laws of Moses are not a kind of Jonah's gourd, springing up in a night; but rather, a great tree with many branches, and also with many roots, a tree fed by heaven's rain and Heaven's dew. The discovery leads us to a bigger God, whose light shines not alone upon Israel, but upon every man coming into the world, upon every nation which at any time has sought the peace and the power of justice." (W. J. Hutchins)

2. A Primitive Court of Law.

Exodus 18 has preserved a very important picture of what happened in Israel before there was any written law. After Moses had safely led the Hebrews out of the land of Egypt, he assembled them in the region of Mount Sinai. We can imagine the tents in the plain, the flocks and herds grazing on the wild lands near by, and the larger tent which

served as a center of worship. Near this place of worship Moses arranged for a sort of impromptu court where the people came to have their disputes settled.

One historic day Moses had become exhausted by the great number of cases that had been brought before him when his father-in-law Jethro came to the place and observed the weariness of Moses. He made a suggestion that so far as we know is the starting point of the growth of all that great system of law which fills so many chapters of our Old Testament. It is most instructive to trace the stages by which the law developed from simple customs and precedents into the ten commandments, and later into more elaborate codes.

The suggestion that Jethro made was that Moses should appoint many assistant judges, who should settle their cases either on the basis of tribal custom or the decisions of kings and leaders like Moses. An example of tribal custom would be the duty of a man who had accidently injured his neighbor's ox to give a sound ox in its place. An example of a leader's decision is found in 1 Sam. 30:24, where David decided that those who stayed by the baggage should share equally in the spoil with those who went into battle.

This scene near Mount Sinai is worthy of careful study because it makes clear the origin of all law, for the "common law" is simply custom and precedent used in deciding cases in court.

3. An Example of the First Written Laws.

One of the first examples in our Bible of the change of the common law into written statutes is

found in Exodus 34. This is a decalogue written for shepherds, and bears on its face the evidence that it was used in Israel before the people had become traders and lived in cities.

Students will note that the number of commandments in Ex. 34, Ex. 18, and Deut. 5 is always ten. The explanation of this carries us back to the day when people could neither read nor write. They were taught to memorize rules by counting on the fingers.

The following is the list of ten commandments which the shepherds were taught to obey, before the Decalogue of Exodus 20 came into force. It is found in Exodus 34:14-26.

(1.) Thou shalt not prostrate thyself before any other god (v. 14).
(2.) Thou shalt make thee no molten gods (v. 17).
(3.) Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread (v. 18).
(4.) Every first born is mine (v. 19).
(5.) The feast of weeks thou shalt observe (v. 22).
(6.) And the feast of ingathering at the turn of the year (v. 22).
(7.) Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven (v. 25).
(8.) The offering of the Passover shall not be left until the morning (v. 25).
(9.) The best of the firstlings of thy ground thou shalt bring to the house of Jahveh thy God (v. 26).
(10.) Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk (v. 26).

When Exodus was written the Jews had become accustomed to regard Moses as the author not only of these first written laws but also of their whole code. It is impossible now for us to know who wrote the different parts of the law. As we have them now the "Mosaic Laws" belong to many different periods of Israel's history. Some of the laws

of the Pentateuch reflect the life of shepherds and farmers, others evidently grew out of the needs of people ruled by kings; still others were written by priests at a time when the temple service dominated the life of the people. It is proper to give Moses the credit for Israel's law because it grew out of the principles which he taught the people.

4. The Decalogue in Exodus and Deuteronomy.

There are two versions of the Ten Commandments, one in Exodus 20 and the other in Deuteronomy 5. This Decalogue shows the influence of the prophets, who cared less for form and more for substance. Amos and Isaiah criticised the people severely for stealing, committing adultery, and bearing false witness, and then trying to make themselves right with God by going through the ceremonies of the Temple. When, in the seventh or eighth centuries before Christ, Hebrew law-givers revised the Mosaic Law to meet the needs of the new era, they could not ignore the new principles which had been announced by the great moral prophets. This explains why Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 are so much more advanced in thought than Exodus 34.

These two versions of the Decalogue differ only slightly and were based upon an original list of short commands which probably ran as follows:

Thou shalt have no other gods beside me.
Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.
Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain.
Remember the Sabbath day to hallow it.
Honor thy father and mother.
Thou shalt do no murder.
Thou shalt not commit adultery.
Thou shalt not steal.
Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
Thou shalt not covet.

The difference between the lists in Exodus and Deuteronomy is due largely to the additions made at different times to explain the reasons for obeying the laws. For example, Exodus 20:11 gives as a reason for obeying the fourth commandment, "for in six days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day." Deuteronomy 5:14,15 gives as a reason for the same commandment; "That thy man servant and thy maid servant may rest as well as thou. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God brought thee out, thence by mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath Day."

5. The Priests' Picturesque Account of the Giving of the Law on Mount Sinai.

Exodus 19:10-25 was written long after the Jews had returned from the Babylonian exile, and gives an idealized account of the beginnings of the law, and ascribes to Moses much of the work done by later law-givers. This vivid description of the scene on Mount Sinai, in which Jehovah dramatically gives the law to Moses, is meant to teach that law is divine in origin and that its authority should be recognized by all the people.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Make a comparative study of the laws of Moses and Hammurabi, noting the date, place, claim of supernatural authority in each, and some likenesses between the two codes.

Report to the class the substance of Exodus 18, and tell what light it throws on the origin of law.

Write in parallel columns in your notebooks the decalogues of Exodus 34 and Exodus 18, and state why it is necessary to suppose that they developed in different periods of history.

Repeat from memory the Decalogue of Exodus 18 in its shorter form.

Deuteronomy 5 contains a version of the Decalogue by later prophets and priests. Name one difference between it and the version in Exodus 18.

Does the scene in Exodus 19:10-25 exaggerate the dignity and importance of the Mosaic law?

Chapter XIV

THE BALAAM ORACLES

The prose story of Balaam. Numbers 22.
First oracle. Numbers 23:7-10.
Second oracle. Numbers 23:18-24.
Third oracle. Numbers 24:3-9.
Fourth oracle. Numbers 24:15-19.

1. Sources of the Oracles.

When we read this strange story of the soothsayer Balaam, we wonder why two distinct accounts of the incident are woven together. The explanation is as follows. Far back in the time of David the original story of Balaam was first told. As travellers and bards repeated it, additions were made and it finally took on several very different forms. Two or three centuries later the historians known to scholars as J and E were writing their histories of Israel and had to decide what form of the Balaam story to preserve. J, who was fond of vivid pictures and the supernatural, chose that form of the story which described the ass as speaking and Balaam as having mystical visions (Num. 22:28; 24:4). This is the same writer who in Genesis 3 describes the serpent as speaking.

The other form of the story (Num.23:7-10, 18-24) was handed down by the E writer, who lived in the northern kingdom, was more restrained in language, never made animals speak, nor had God appear in person. As we study the four oracles, we shall enjoy them better if we remember that the first two

were written by E and the last two by J. When we come upon apparent contradictions in chapter 22, we should remember that they are explained by the circumstance that two accounts have been woven into one.

2. The Story Behind the Poems.

Balak, king of Moab, in dread of the great advancing host of Hebrews, which was about to encamp in his territory and impoverish his land, sent his elders to secure the services of a soothsayer by the name of Balaam who was credited with the supernatural power of calling down curses or blessings from heaven. When the elders had made known their mission, Balaam invited them to lodge with him that night. During the night God talked with Balaam and told him not to go with the elders, and not to curse the Hebrews, for the blessing of heaven was upon them. So in the morning the soothsayer refused to go.

When the elders reported to Balak that they had failed, he sent some of his most honored princes to beseech Balaam to come. During the night after their arrival, God again appeared to Balaam and gave him permission to go with the princes, but commanded him to say only the words which He should put in his mouth.

In the morning Balaam saddled his ass and started toward Moab with the princes. On the way the ass saw an angel in the road and ran aside into the field, but Balaam whipped her back into the road. Soon they came to a narrow pass between two cliffs. Again the ass saw an angel and shied against the wall, crushing the prophet's foot. A

little farther on, in a very narrow place in the road, the ass saw the angel a third time and lay down under Balaam. In anger, the soothsayer smote the animal with his staff. Then the ass spoke and rebuked her master, and at that moment God opened the eyes of Balaam and for the first time he saw the angel standing in the middle of the road with a sword drawn in his hand. The angel said, "Go with the men, but only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak."

As soon as Balaam reached Moab, the king hastened to take him to a high place of Baal from which they could view the tents of the Hebrews which seemed to cover the land. Balaam ordered seven altars built and offered on every altar a bullock and a ram. Then he went alone to a barren height and waited for inspiration from heaven.

3. The Four Oracles.

These four oracles and the circumstances under which they were delivered have no parallel in the Bible. A heathen seer, standing on a bare and rugged mountain top, not far from "Nebo's lonely mountain," is inspired by the God of the Hebrews and delivers some remarkable prophecies. Balaam seems to go into a sort of trance and to utter words of mystic meaning which he himself does not comprehend. King Balak, from his position near the smoking altars, is looking up to the soothsayer with awe, combined with a happy expectation of supernatural aid against his enemies. But to his consternation the inspired prophet blesses the enemies of Moab instead of cursing them. Hodges, in his book *How to Know the Bible,* says: "This pagan seer is

inspired of God. As Melchizedek, king of Salem, was a true priest of the Most High God (Gen.14:18), so Balaam is a true prophet. The gift of inspiration overpasses the boundaries of religion. 'God came unto Balaam,' as he came to Confucius, to Zoroaster, to men of religion who had no place in either the Old Testament or the New.''

Balak then takes the prophet to the top of Mount Pisgah, builds seven altars, and offers up a bullock and a ram on every altar to see if the oracle will not speak in his favor. Again Balaam goes apart to meet Jehovah while the king of Moab and his princes stand by the altars anxiously awaiting the result. When the divine afflatus seizes him, the prophet says;

> ''God is not a man, that he should lie,
> Neither the son of man that he should repent.
> He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob,
> Neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel.''

This strange process is repeated on Mount Peor where two oracles favorable to Israel are spoken.

> ''And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he smote his hands together; and Balak said unto Balaam, I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed them these three times. Therefore now flee thou to thy place; I thought to promote thee unto great honor; but, lo, Jehovah hath kept thee back from honor. And Balaam said unto Balak, Spake I not also to thy messengers that thou sentest unto me, saying, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of Jehovah, to do either good or bad of mine own mind; what Jehovah speaketh, that will I speak?''

The literary form of these oracles is noteworthy. The first has seven synonymous parallelisms, and the rhythm is unusually fine. Examples of the progressive and antithetic parallelisms occur in the other oracles, and the metaphors and similes are numerous.

The wise choice of words and the skillful use of images seem to reflect a rather advanced stage of poetry in Israel. It is believed that these oracles took form in the time of David, because the references to Moab and Edom imply that period of history. Doubtless they were embodied in the J and E histories during the ninth and eighth centuries before Christ. These suggestions open the door to a very inviting realm of literary study.

In the realm of religion, also, these oracles open up many interesting lines of investigation. For example, what is the meaning of the prophet's mystic experience in 24:3,4? Again, how do you explain the fact that Israel's God inspires a heathen soothsayer? Does it foreshadow the belief of later ages that "God hath not left himself without witness in any nation?" Balaam's prophecies concerning the future of Israel have had a remarkable fulfillment. Study 23:9, 10; 24:7, 9; 24:17-19.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Tell the prose story of Balaam.

Describe the scene of the four oracles.

Write in your notebooks the best examples of synonymous, progressive, and antithetic parallelisms in these oracles.

Make a list of the different figures of speech found in the oracles.

Discuss the question whether God in ancient times revealed himself to any people besides the Israelites.

Write a verse that contains a prediction about Israel, one that shows the sincerity of Balaam, and another that describes his mystic experience.

Part 4

LITERARY SELECTIONS ILLUSTRATING THE FRONTIER LIFE OF THE HEBREWS DURING THE FIRST CENTURY IN PALESTINE

Chapter XV

THE SONG OF DEBORAH

The prose setting. Judges 4.
The song. Judges 5.

1. The Historical and Literary Importance of the Song.

This victory ode of Deborah's celebrates one of the great crises in Hebrew history. After the death of Joshua the Hebrew tribes were in danger of being crowded out of Palestine by the Canaanites whom the Hebrews had left unconquered in the largest cities and plains of the country. They dared not use the regular roads for fear of capture and they were not allowed to have a blacksmith among them lest they should make weapons. All the work of Moses and Joshua seemed likely to be undone and the Promised Land lost to the Hebrews.

At this juncture arose Deborah, a woman whose wisdom and prophetic powers brought many inquirers to her as she sat under the famous palm-tree, five or six miles north of Jerusalem. Deborah saw that something must be done at once to prevent the extermination of Israel. She sent for a noted

military leader by the name of Barak and with his help gathered ten thousand soldiers from the tribes. They assembled on Mount Tabor in the valley of Jezreel where Sisera, commander-in-chief of the Canaanites, had mustered a large army to quell the uprising. On the day of the battle, when the Israelites rushed down from Mount Tabor upon the enemy, a timely downpour of rain made the valley impassable for the 900 chariots of Sisera and Israel was victorious.

> "From heaven fought the stars,
> From their courses they fought against Sisera.
> The river Kishon swept them away,
> That ancient river, the river Kishon."

Josephus, writing in the first century A. D., explains the victory as follows:

> "There came down from heaven a great storm with a vast quantity of rain and hail, and the wind blew the rain full in the face of the Canaanites, and so darkened their eyes that their arrows and slings were of little or no advantage to them, nor would the coldness of the air permit the soldiers to make use of their swords; while this storm did not so much incommode the Israelites because it came at their backs."

Following the battle, after the custom of those days, they celebrated the victory by dancing and singing on the part of the women. It is supposed that all or part of Judges 5 was written for that occasion. The song is recognized by almost all scholars as one of the earliest pieces of Hebrew literature in the Old Testament, and it is also one of the finest. Bewer says, "This triumphal ode belongs in the judgment of critics to the finest odes in the literature of the world and is not excelled in poetic power by any of the later war poems of Israel."

Fowler writes, "Whatever of uncertainty may attach to the effort to assign many specific poems to the pre-monarchical period, the one great literary monument of this age, the Deborah Song, is in itself evident proof that already, in the days of the early tribal struggles for possession of the land, the poet's art had reached great power and some refinement." Kent, in his *The Songs, Hymns, and Prayers of the Old Testament,* says: "It is the longest and noblest example of the triumphal ode in the Old Testament. In a series of dramatic scenes it presents the feelings of the actors and the important stages in the decisive battle which determined the mastery of Canaan and the fate of Jehovah's people."

2. The Thought and Form of the Poem.

Study first of all the six graphic and vigorous scenes: (1) verses 4 and 5, a picture of God's march from Sinai to Palestine to save his people; (2) verses 6 to 8, the wretched condition of Isdael, oppressed by the Canaanites; (3) verses 12 to 18, the conduct of the Hebrew tribes when Deborah sought to rouse them to action; (4) verses 19 to 22, description of the battle; (5) verses 25-27, the death of Sisera by the hand of a woman; (6) verses 28-30, the pathetic account of Sisera's mother at home waiting for her son's return. Among the leading ideas of the poem are the following: The leadership of woman, the rallying power of belief in God, and the contrast between those that "jeoparded their lives unto the death" and the cowards that during the battle "sat among the sheepfolds" and "came not to the help of Jehovah against the mighty". Perhaps there is no better expression in literature of the scorn due

those who take no part in a supreme effort to save a nation.

The literary form of the ode will repay careful study. One should begin by reading it aloud in order to feel the rhythm and power of the poetry. It is well to enumerate the figures of speech and to distinguish between the different kinds of parallelism in order to make the thought as clear as possible. A device, which may be called stair-like parallelism, of which Psalm 121 is a fine example, is used in several places in the Song of Deborah. In verses 12-14, the words "awake," "arise," and "down" form the stairs. In verses 19-23, the same effect is produced by the repetition of "fought," "prancings," and "help". Observe the same figure in verses 26, 27. There are three cases of the figure of apostrophe, in verses 2-3, 9-10, and 31.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

In the statement of facts, how does the poem in Judges 5 differ from the prose account in Judges 4?

What crisis does the poem celebrate?

What is the meaning of "from heaven fought the stars"?

What estimate do scholars place on the historical and literary importance of the Song of Deborah?

Write in your notebooks the three leading ideas of the poem, together with references to the verses that illustrate those ideas.

Make a list of the different figures of speech which the poem contains.

Had the author of Psalm 19:4-6 read Judges 5:31?

Compare Deborah with Joan of Arc.

Find the following passages in the Song: (1) One that says it was Jehovah's battle which was fought that day; (2) an allusion to a tribe that made great resolutions, but did not act; (3) a figure of speech that stands for a shower of rain; (4) an imitation of the stamping of horses' feet.

What is the chief religious lesson of the poem?

CHAPTER XVI

THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND GIDEON

A picture of Gideon. Judges 6:11-24.
Why Gideon was called Jerubbaal. Judges 6:25-32.
The fleece of wool. Judges 6:33-40.
The band of Gideon chosen. Judges 7:1-8.
The dream of victory. Judges 7:9-14.
The sword of the Lord and Gideon. Judges 7:15-23.
Gideon declines a great honor. Judges 8:22-24.
Jotham's Fable. Judges 9:7-15.

1. The Menace of the Midianites.

The nomads of the south and east of Palestine, variously termed Midianites, Ishmaelites, and the Children of the East, made frequent raids on the disorganized Hebrew farmers in the eleventh century before Christ. Like the Bedouin of today, they did not attempt a permanent conquest, but only a thievish depredation. "Nomads prefer that settled people should do the work of sowing, while they reap the harvest. The comparison with locusts which pass over the land, stripping it and leaving it bare, is apt. The temporary flight of the inhabitants through the hills and caves was repeated up to the time of the Maccabees, and is still common in Syria, in the Balkans, and elsewhere at the present time."

2. The Character of Gideon.

The stories about Gideon are so well told that they have made his name a household word in all civilized countries. The conditions under which he

lived are vividly portrayed. There was no strong ruler, no commercial activity, no army; only groups of farmers here and there, struggling for a living, and "every man did what was right in his own eyes." The following criticism of Gideon's character by Professor Phelps is too severe when we think of the crude age in which Gideon lived:

> "They were finally delivered by the cautious and sceptical Gideon, who must have tried God's patience with his doubtings, questionings and bargainings, but who for some reason was rewarded. His faith, like that of many others, depended wholly on facts and figures. I cannot regard him as a hero; he took no chances. . . . . The calculating shrewdness of human nature, the desire to invest with only assured profit, are sharply revealed in the character of Gideon."

The New Century commentary has a fairer estimate of Gideon.

> "He was evidently a man of great influence in Palestine. His own personal character is more clearly delineated than that of any other hero (except Samson, whose life is of quite another character). Above even his simple straight forwardness and his courage stands his religious nature."

If one studies the references to Gideon in the passages written at the head of this chapter, he will be able to add other qualities of character to the description of the man.

3. Gideon's Change of Name.

Fowler (*History of the Literature of Ancient Israel*) believes that the occurrence of the two names, Gideon and Jerubbaal, is due to the combination of the two historical narratives J and E into one. Two historical episodes, one about Gideon, another about Jerubbaal, are here united. These documents J and

E are a continuation of those that we studied in Genesis and Exodus.

The story is a vivid picture of denominational rivalry in the little town of Ophrah, a few miles northeast of Bethel.

4. The Test of Gideon's Call.

It was the custom in ancient times to ask for a material sign of God's approval. The call of Moses was signalized by a burning bush, and Elisha's call was evidenced by the miraculous dividing of the waters of the Jordan. The use of the fleece of wool as a test by Gideon shows that he had not outgrown the customs of his day and generation. Whatever interpretation scholars may put on this story, there can be no doubt that Gideon believed in a "power that makes for righteousness," and that the belief was effective in his life.

Read Mrs. Alexander's poem on *The Fleece of Gideon.*

5. The Selection of Gideon's Band.

It is not numbers alone that count. "Ten men working together, each man working heartily, what have you? You have ten times one man plus their unity, plus the enthusiasm born of cooperation, plus all the incalculable energies that are born only when heart is joined to heart, and soul is joined to soul."

After Gideon had dismissed 22,000 men, who were "fearful and trembling," 10,000 still remained. Jehovah told him that was too many, and the water test was tried in order to reduce the number. Various explanations have been given of this test. The best one is that the 300 took water in their

hands and licked it up as a dog laps, and that the rest bent down on their knees and drank directly from the stream. The latter would be less valuable as soldiers since they showed poor judgment in putting themselves in a defenseless posture when an enemy might be near.

6. A Dream Encourages Gideon.

The ancients believed that every dream had its meaning, and was a message from heaven. Gideon overheard two Midianites telling a dream which one of them had had concerning a round cake of barley bread which had rolled on its edge, struck against a Midianite tent, and overturned it. This dream was interpreted as indicating the defeat of Midian by a man of Israel.

7. The Battle and the Offer of Kingship.

At about 10 P. M. a successful attack was made by the Israelites. Gideon's men stood on three sides of the camp of the enemy, shouting, blowing their trumpets, and waving their torches. In a panic the Midianites fled toward the Jordan.

The men of Israel (probably of his own tribe Manasseh) offered Gideon the kingship; and the offer included the right to have Gideon's son succeed him, and thus establish a royal line. Gideon's declination implied that God does not desire that any king should stand between Himself and His people Israel.

8. Jotham's Fable.

There are only two fables in the Bible; the other is in 2 Kings 14:9.

This one in Judges 9:17 is most interesting. The

satire of the fable is aimed at Abimelech. The seventy sons of Gideon had been exercising authority over the Israelites, who were without any established government. At last one of them, Abimelech, asserted his supremacy, killed off all his brothers, except one, and assumed the kingship. When the surviving brother, Jotham, heard the news, he spoke this fable to the people. He went up on Mount Gerizim on the south side of Shechem, and, standing on a projecting rock, addressed the assembled crowd. He said that the olive, fig tree, and vine declined to rule over the other trees because God had given them nobler work to do; but the thorn pompously accepted the invitation, and boasted in ridiculous fashion of its own power.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Under what circumstances was Gideon called to be the savior of his tribe?

How does Phelps differ from the New Century commentary in his estimate of Gideon?

Write in your notebooks as complete a list as possible of the good qualities of Gideon.

What evidences have we in Judges 6-8 that the two histories J and E are continued through the Pentateuch into Judges?

Explain the reason for the use of the fleece of wool.

Tell the story of the reduction of Gideon's band.

What was the meaning of the water test?

Tell the dream that encouraged Gideon.

Describe the night battle.

Repeat Jotham's fable from memory.

Chapter XVII

THE IDYL OF RUTH

The Book of Ruth, Chapters 1-4.

1. The Best Short Story.

A recent text on the short story asserts that the Book of Ruth is one of the best-told and most beautiful stories in all literature. It is simple and earnest in thought, and has beauty and rhythm of style. The plot involves many dramatic incidents. The characters are described with an art so perfect that the reader is unaware of it. The contrasts in scenes and the sudden changes in fortune of the characters sustain the interest of the reader.

A good woman of Bethlehem loses her husband and two sons; Ruth, a heathen girl, is exalted to a place among the chosen people; Boaz, a rich and notable man, marries this poor girl, who is gleaning in his fields; from a heathen ancestress, the Christ of the Jews is descended.

The best way to enjoy this book is after all, as Moulton has said in his *Modern Reader's Bible,* to read it without comment. "The story of Ruth," he says, "is the very ideal and type of the Idyl: so delicate in its transparent simplicity that the worst service one can do the story is to comment on it."

2. The Motive of the Author.

The author makes so prominent the fact that Ruth was a Moabite woman that it has long been believed by scholars that his motive was to condemn the racial

exclusiveness of the Jews, for the story in its present form comes from that period in their history shortly after Ezra and Nehemiah had enforced the law against marriages with foreign women. A protest had been made against this by the son of the high priest who refused to give up his foreign wife and led a protestant group to Mount Gerizim and built a rival temple there. The books of Ruth and Jonah both bear witness to the existence of a liberal party in Jerusalem. If this is a true explanation of the book, certainly it must have made a profound impression in later times, when David's genealogy was traced back to Ruth. In still later times, when Jesus was found to be a descendant of David and Ruth, the broader view of life as presented in this story seems to have been fully justified.

3. Interpretation of Difficult Passages.

In the days when the judges judged, 1:1. The scene of the story is laid in the far distant age before Samuel and Saul. How early it was written we do not know; the last version was produced for a special purpose at a late date as we have seen above.

Wives of the women of Moab, 1:4. Marriage with foreign women was not forbidden until later times. Deut. 23:3, which was not in force until the seventh century before Christ, is especially severe on this point.

Chemosh, 1:15, was the god of the Moabites. Jehovah was the God of the Jews. Each tribe had its own peculiar worship and there was no knowledge of the One God over all.

Naomi. . . . Mara, 1:20. Naomi means pleasant, and Mara means bitter.

Glean among the ears of corn, 2:2. This custom was afterward reduced to law in Deut. 24:19 and Lev. 23:22.

One of our near kinsmen, 2:20. A kinsman in ancient custom was one who redeems a claim. If a man died without heirs, it was the duty of the kinsman to marry the widow and to give the first-born son the name of the dead. This son would inherit the property and perpetuate the family name.

Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there, 4:1. The gate of an Eastern city is often a building, in the shade of which men may sit comfortably in the heat of the day. Near it is a broad open space where a market is held and the people meet for the interchange of news and settlements of disputes (Gen. 19:1; 23:10; 34:20).

A man drew off his shoe, 4:7. The drawing off of the shoe meant the giving up of the man's rights as in Deut. 25:9. Among the Arabs today as among the Hebrews, the shoe is the symbol of possession.

4. The Dramatization of Ruth.

The story of Ruth lends itself readily to the dramatic form. Very little scenery is necessary and the parts are very easy for students to take. Many a student has been awakened for the first time to the beauty of the Bible by taking part in a presentation of Ruth as a drama.

Eighteen or more persons may be used in the cast of characters.

Naomi, wife of Elimelech.
Elimelech, a man of Bethlehem.
Mahlon, Chilion, sons of Naomi and Elimelech.

Ruth, Orpah, of the land of Moab, widows of Mahlor and Chilion.
Boaz, a kinsman of Naomi.
Micah, a kinsman of Naomi.
Deborah, a prophetess.
Rebekah, Hannah, women of Bethlehem.
Overseer of Boaz' field.
Two Young Men, Two Young Women, reapers in Boaz' field.
Gideon, Samuel, elders of the city.

The following is a possible arrangement of the scenes or acts in the drama:

Scene 1, Ruth 1:1, 2

Place: Bethlehem. Persons: Elimelech, Naomi, Mahlon, Chilion. A time of famine.

Scene 2. Ruth 1:3-22

Places: Moab, the journey back to Bethlehem, and the well of Bethlehem.
Persons: Naomi, Orpah, Ruth, and some women of Bethlehem.

Scene 3. Ruth Chapters 2 and 3

Places: Field of Boaz and the house of Naomi.
Persons: Boaz, Naomi, Ruth and the reapers in field of Boaz.

Scene 4. Ruth Chapter 4

Places: Gate of the city, with public square just inside the gate; the house of Boaz, in which the ancestor of David and Christ was born.
Persons: Boaz, a near kinsman, the elders of the city; Ruth, a little child.

5. Outstanding Ideas of the Idyl.

No piece of literature can be really great unless it has deep thought as well as fine style. What are the great teachings of Ruth?

While the action of the story seems to turn on the recognition of the duty on the part of the nearest relative to marry the widow of a man who has died without male children, nevertheless the prominence of the fact that the greatest royal line of the Hebrews was descended from a Moabite girl compels us to think that the leading idea is racial breadth and sympathy. The proud exclusiveness of the Jew, and by inference all racial exclusiveness and narrowness of sympathy, is condemned.

The other great suggestion of this book is the "grace of loyalty." Professor Phelps in his *Human Nature in the Bible* makes this the leading theme of the Book of Ruth. He says: "Ruth is a pretty name: in Hebrew it means *friendship* and in English *pity*. She lived up to her name in both languages; she was both loyal and sympathetic....There is nothing sentimental and nothing insipid in this idyl; it is a suburban pastoral, illustrating the grace of loyalty. We have learned in the twentieth century not to minimise the virtue of loyalty; this fine flower of human nature has its roots deep in the human heart. The beauty of loyalty consists in giving rather than receiving; giving all if need be, and asking nothing before or after. Selfish and calculating persons are conspicuously without it; and it is not fully understood by men of pure intellect. But there is always something splendid, something refreshing about people who have it."

The words in which Ruth expressed her loyalty to Naomi will never be forgotten.

"Entreat me not to leave thee,
  And to return from following after thee:
For whither thou goest, I will go;
  And where thou lodgest, I will lodge;
Thy people shall be my people,
  And thy God my God;
Where thou diest, I will die,
  And there will I be buried.
Jehovah do so to me, and more also,
  If aught but death part thee and me."

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Name the leading characters in the story of Ruth.

What sudden changes of fortune do these characters experience? Tell the story.

What elements in the character of the heroine Ruth give distinction to the story?

What was the motive of the author?

Write in your notebooks four or more literary qualities of the Book of Ruth that entitle it to a place among the best writings in the world.

Write in your notebooks in very brief form the drama of Ruth as suggested in point 4.

Memorize the little poem on loyalty in 1:16, 17.

Chapter XVIII

THE BOY SAMUEL

The song of Hannah. I Samuel 2:1-10.
The Magnificat. Luke 1:46-55.
The call of Samuel. I Samuel 3:1-21.

1. The Literary Character of the Books of Samuel.

When the reader of the Bible turns to the history in the books of Samuel, he expects to find a series of more or less dry records. But to his surprise he comes upon a group of pictures, like that of the boy Samuel, so clearly drawn that they can never be forgotten. One character after another is delineated in the midst of dramatic situations which sustain attention to the end. Moreover, the narrative in which these pictures are imbedded is remarkable for its vivid and unpremeditated simplicity.

Prof. Meyer thinks that the narrative in Samuel "stand far above every thing which we know elsewhere of ancient historical oriental writing." Indeed, they compare favorably with the best histories in the world, and by many people are regarded as the most important.

2. The Song of Hannah.

Hannah's song of thanksgiving over the birth of Samuel is comparable in many ways to Mary's song in Luke 1:46-55. The thoughts of the two poems are similiar. Both express exultant joy in God's saving power (I Sam. 2:1 and Lk. 1:47); and both rejoice

in the exaltation of the poor, and the bringing low of the rich (I Sam. 2:7 and Lk. 1:52).

The likeness between the songs in thought and structure is so great that we may assume that the author of the one was influenced by the other. The same type of parallelism occurs in both, and both use the same unusual word "horn". As in the case of other poems of the Old Testament, the best introduction to Hannah's Song is a study of the different kinds of parallelism and figures which appear in it.

3. The Call of Samuel.

The Bible gives a great deal of space to the visions and other experiences connected with the call to service of men who afterward became distinguished. Moses, Gideon, Elisha, Isaiah, and many others were called after they had reached the age of manhood and the descriptions of their experiences are among the most treasured writings of the world. Samuel received his call in early boyhood and thus differs from every other great character in the Bible.

The scene of Samuel's call was the tabernacle at Shiloh where the boy had been placed by his mother and consecrated to a religious life. He was, it is estimated, between twelve and fifteen years old, and his duty was to assist the aged priest Eli in the services. He had a little chamber in the tabernacle, not far from Eli, which opened into the main room where "the lamp of God" burned all night. Joshua, evidently, had followed this same custom of sleeping in the Tent of Meeting (Ex. 33:11).

In the night Samuel was awakened by a voice calling his name. He ran to Eli thinking that the aged priest needed him. At the third call Eli sug-

gested that the call was from God and told the lad to answer, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." When Samuel did answer God, he was told of the doom of Eli's house. Very soon it was noised abroad that Samuel was to be the next prophet.

The times needed a leader like Samuel, for Eli's sons, who were the active priests, were bad men. They used the best of the sacrifices to satisfy their own appetites, and were immoral in their conduct. Because of the sins of these priests men despised the sacred sacrifices. In later years Samuel became a great prophet in Israel, thus fulfilling the promise of these early days.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Describe the literary beauty of the Books of Samuel, and name some of the characters which are finely delineated in those books.

Select a passage which is "remarkable for its vivid and unpremeditated simplicity."

How do these books compare with other histories?

Write in your notebooks passages which are esssentially alike in thought from Hannah's Song and the Magnificat.

Write also a synonymous parallelism from each of these poems.

Make a list of the important religious lessons in Hannah's Song.

What great men have vivid stories told about them in the Bible concerning their calls to service?

Describe the call of Samuel.

Why was he afraid to tell the aged priest Eli what God had said?

As a "prophet" what would Samuel be expected to do?

What were the conditions among the priests and people that showed the need of a man like Samuel?

Part 5

LITERARY SELECTIONS WITH THE HEBREW MONARCHY FOR A BACKGROUND

Chapter XIX

THE CHOICE OF SAUL AS THE FIRST KING

The first meeting of Samuel and Saul. I Samuel 9:1-26.
The anointing of Saul and the three signs. I Samuel 9:27-10:13.
Saul delivers a town in distress. I Samuel 11:1-15.

1. The Sources of the Books of Samuel.

Even a hasty reading of the way in which Saul became king, as it is described in I Sam. 9-12, reveals statements that are hard to reconcile. One series of statements represents Samuel as bitterly opposing the monarchy and describing the many evils that the people will bring upon themselves if they have a king rule over them; the other pictures Samuel as earnestly working for the establishment of the monarchy and asserts that God indicated to Samuel that Saul should be anointed as king. The first series is found in I Sam. 8 and 12; the second in I Sam. 9, 10, 11.

The explanation of this difference is found in the fact that there was an early and a late account of the founding of the Hebrew kingdom. The early account, probably, is the oldest historical writing among the Hebrews, and comes from the tribe of Benjamin, Saul's old home. The date of this document is usu-

ally given as 950 B. C. The later document, which represents Samuel as opposed to the kingdom, originated among the prophets of Northern Israel not earlier than 750 B. C.

2. The First Meeting of Samuel and Saul.

After the defeat of the Hebrews by the Philistines the sacred ark was lost to Israel. Eli, the priest at Shiloh, died of grief. The ark had many strange adventures and was finally sent back to the Hebrews because plagues broke out among the people who retained it. Samuel had come to be regarded as Israel's judge. When the people obeyed his decisions they overcame their enemies.

But Samuel was growing old, and there was need of a youthful leader to meet the crisis brought about by the encroachment of foreign enemies. The Philistines on the west, and the Ammonites on the east had become especially troublesome.

The way in which a brilliant, youthful leader was provided is described in the passages printed at the head of this chapter. They tell how the tall, impulsive, and capable Saul went out to find his father's lost herd, and found, instead, a kingdom. Read the story by the following outline, and learn to tell it in a way that will bring out the character of the persons, the location of the places, and the dramatic changes in the experience of Saul as clearly and interestingly as possible.

I Samuel 9:1-10, Saul, in search of his father's lost herd, is directed to the prophet Samuel.
9:11-21, Saul goes to Ramah and finds Samuel there, and Samuel has been warned by God of the coming of Saul.
9:22-24, The banquet on the hill at which the youthful Saul was given the seat of honor.

9:25-10:1, Samuel entertains Saul at his home, and next morning anoints the astonished young man as king.
10:2-16, The strange experiences of Saul on his way home.

3. The Significance of the Anointing with Oil.

Anointing was the method of consecrating a man to the kingly office. A small amount of oil was poured upon the head by some person who was recognized as the official representative of God. From the moment of his anointing, a man was set apart from others, much as one is officially set apart as President of the United States by the oath administered to him in behalf of the sovereign people by some legal representative.

I Samuel 10:1 is the earliest recorded instance in the Old Testament of the act of anointing. This custom had been long observed in Canaan as we may infer from Judges 9: 8, 15, and from a reference in the Tell-el-Amarna letters to the anointing of a Canaanite prince. "At the outset it clearly signified the transference to the person anointed of part of the mysterious holiness or virtue of the deity in whose name and by whose representative it was performed."

This subject is of peculiar importance to a student of the Bible because the word "Messiah", afterwards applied to Jesus, is simply the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word "anointed." When applied to Jesus, it signified that he was recognized as that ideal king so often spoken of in the Old Testament.

4. The Event which made Saul, thus far practically unknown to the Hebrew tribes, a famous man and most acceptable king.

This somewhat sensational episode is described in I Samuel XI. Saul, a farmer-king, is plowing with

his oxen, at Gibeah. Messengers come running to him from beyond the Jordan, asking for immediate help against the Ammonites, who had threatened to put out the eyes of the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead. The manner in which Saul responds convinces his nation that he is worthy to be their leader. Read the story by the following outline:

I Samuel 11:1-5, The messengers from Jabesh find Saul in the field.
11:6-10, Saul's method of assembling an army.
11:11, The victory over the Ammonites.
11:12-15, Enthusiastic confirmation of Saul as King.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

What explains the two different views of Samuel's attitude toward the kingdom?

What chapter of the Bible contains the oldest consecutive piece of historical writing done by the Hebrews?

What conditions in Israel called for a vigorous young leader?

Describe the circumstances under which Saul was introduced to Samuel.

Tell about the banquet in the evening and the anointing of Saul the next morning.

What was the meaning of the three signs by which Saul's destiny was confirmed?

What did the custom of anointing with oil signify?

To what word in the Hebrew language is the Greek word "Messiah" equivalent, and why was it applied to Jesus?

Give an account of Saul's call to deliver the city of Jabesh-Gilead.

How did this victory affect the reputation of Saul?

Discuss the importance of that respect for authority which the people in all nations have shown. Why did anointing add to the recognized authority of rulers?

Chapter XX

VIGNETTES OF JONATHAN AND DAVID

Jonathan in a daring exploit. I Samuel 14:1-14.
Jonathan as a popular idol. I Samuel 14:36-45.
David and Goliath. I Samuel 17:4-51.
An historic friendship. I Samuel 18:1-5; 19:1-7.
David as a military hero. I Samuel 18:6-9.
Jonathan saves David. I Samuel 20:1-42.

1. The Setting of the Vignettes.

The Philistines had come up from the coast-lands to renew their attempt to conquer the Hebrews. Saul had gathered a little army of three thousand men to check their advance, but he failed to hold Michmash, an important Hebrew fortification, and the victorious enemy stationed a garrison there. Michmash was the name of the precipitous cliff across the valley from Geba, where Jonathan was with the Hebrew garrison which was under the command of Saul.

2. Jonathan As a Soldier and Idol of the People.

Jonathan proposes to his armor-bearer that they go down across the valley, climb the opposite cliff, and make a surprise attack on the Philistine garrison, trusting in Jehovah to give them success. As the brave young men suddenly appear and kill twenty men with javelins and stones, the taunts of the enemy were changed to wonder and fear. An earthquake further roused their superstitious terror and the panic quickly spread. Saul saw the commotion and ordered a general attack.

When the Philistines were in full flight, an incident occured which illustrates the superstition of Saul and his people, and at the same time throws into relief the intelligence and goodness of Jonathan. In order to guard against delay in the pursuit, Saul pronounced a curse on any one who should stop to take food until the rout of the Philistines was complete. Jonathan, not being informed of this curse, ate a little honey. Now the oracle, which Saul consulted to see if he should continue the pursuit on the next day, refused to answer. To Saul and the priest this meant that some one had sinned and God was offended. Having ordered all the soldiers to come together Saul found that his own son Jonathan was the offender. Either from a sense of justice or from stubbornness Saul refused to save Jonathan but the people interfered and said that the curse must not fall on their idol who had that day saved them from the enemy.

3. Young David in Single Combat Against the Giant.

One's sympathy is wholly with the boy David as he comes up from the farm laden with food for his brothers who are soldiers in the Hebrew army. When David arrives at camp, he finds the army frightened by a Philistine giant who has challenged the Hebrews to single combat. The story of David's valor and success should be told by the pupils in class. An excellent summary is found in the outline followed by Kuhnau, who was the originator of the type of musical composition called the sonata. In a quaint, delightful sonata, entitled David and Goliath, he arranged the separate movements as follows:

1. The stamping and taunting of Goliath.
2. Terror of the Israelites and their prayer.
3. Courage of David, his desire to meet the giant, and his confidence.
4. Contest of words between David and Goliath.
5. The combat in which Goliath falls and is slain.
6. Flight of the Philistines who are pursued and slain by the Israelites.
7. Exultation and feast of the victorious people.
8. The praise of David sung by the women, in antiphonal choirs.
9. General joy and triumph expressing itself in dancing and singing.

4. The Friendship of David and Jonathan.

This friendship is so beautifully described in these brief passages that it has taken a permanent place in the thought of the world and has become a type of all generous and lasting friendship. Greek literature has a parallel in the love of Damon and Pythias. Pythias had been condemned to die and his friend Damon was allowed to take his place in prison while the friend was freed to attend to important business on the condition that Damon should die as a substitute in case Pythias did not return on the appointed day. When Pythias did return on time, the ruler of the city was so impressed with their friendship that he pardoned the offender and asked to be counted in the circle of their friends.

Saul's jealously blinded him to the beauty of the friendship of David and Jonathan.

David saw that everything he did increased Saul's feeling of enmity, and he asked Jonathan's aid. They laid a plan to discover Saul's intentions concerning David. David was to hide during the days of special sacrifices, then if Saul was still determined to kill him, Jonathan was to make it known by a flight of arrows.

The young men made a solemn pact to be friends forever. The story of the arrows should be told in dramatic detail.

5. David's Military Glory.

When David had completed his first campaign against the Philistines the women sang his praise in a famous couplet,

> Saul has slain his thousands,
> And David his ten thousands.

This is an example of the folk-lore of Israel. A couplet would originate in connection with the dancing and singing over a victory, and often that couplet would become the basis of a poem of considerable length as in the case of Exodus 15.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Describe the military and geographical background of these stories, noting the boundaries of the Philistines and the location of the places mentioned.

What peculiar formation of the land made possible the exploit of Jonathan at Michmash?

Why was the curse pronounced by Saul on one eating food taken so seriously by the people?

Tell in detail the story of the curse, and give from it an example of the democratic spirit of the Hebrews.

Let one student demonstrate the telling of the story of David and Goliath as it should be told a class of young pupils.

What characteristics are essential in such a friendship as that of David and Jonathan?

Why has there been no such historic friendship between two women?

Chapter XXI

DAVID AS AN OUTLAW

David secures the sword of Goliath. I Samuel 21:1-19.
At the cave of Adullam. I Samuel 22:1, 2.
David "inquires of the Lord." I Samuel 23:1-13.
The meanness of Nabal. I Samuel 25:2-13.
The eloquent plea of Abigail. I Samuel 25:14-35.
David spares Saul's life. I Samuel 26:1-25.

1. Introduction. The Secret of the Success of David and of Israel.

Saul's jealousy compelled David to flee from the king's court at Gibeah. His adventures, as he wandered in the wild regions of Judah from the borders of the Philistines in the west to the dark ravines of the Dead Sea on the east, reveal a many sided character. He did many cruel and evil deeds, but on the whole he stood for justice in those wild times when there was no law and order. He was intensely religious and tender hearted, and secured for the nation many great advantages, like the establishment of a national system of worship.

The Hebrew nation, also, was many-sided and often seemed likely to fail because of its great sins, yet it survived while more powerful nations disappeared without leaving a trace of good. George Adam Smith contrasts Israel with the Philistines in this respect: "Israel attained to a destiny, equalled in the history of mankind only by Greece and Rome, whereas all the fame of the Philistine lies in having served as a foil to the genius of the Hebrew, and today his name against theirs is the symbol of impenetrableness and obscurantism."

The attainments of David and of Israel alike are explained by two things: their belief in a holy God who had a plan for human history, and a sense of a mission of great importance to all mankind.

2. The Sword of Goliath.

David escaped from the king's headquarters at Gibeah, four miles north of Jerusalem, without food and weapons. In the path of his flight was the little town of Nob, where there was a place of worship. David, pretending to be on a secret mission from the king, called at the sanctuary, and asked the high priest for bread and a spear, or sword. There was no bread except that which had been consecrated to the uses of the sanctuary, but David took that and also the sword of Goliath which had been kept as a souvenir of the great victory over the Philistines. A little later Saul took terrible revenge on the priests and the people of Nob for giving this aid to David (I Samuel 22:9-23).

We next see David at the cave of Adullam where 400 other outlaws have joined him. Adullam was about 15 miles southwest from Jerusalem. Kirkpatrick, in his commentary on Samuel in the Cambridge Bible, calls attention to the fact that "the sides of the tributary valleys are lined with rows of caves, amply sufficient to accommodate David's 400 men."

3. David's Religion.

It is difficult for us to put ourselves in the place of David and understand what he meant by prayer. He calls it "inquiring of the Lord." A good example of David's religious acts is found in the story in Samuel 23 of his deliverance of the village of Keilah from the Philistines. When they asked him to save Keilah,

he went to the priest Abiathar, who had escaped from the massacre at Nob, and asked him to consult Jehovah concerning the proposed expedition. Abiathar put on his ephod, which looked like a breastplate, and on a little shelf attached to the ephod, shook dice, called Urim and Thummim. If the dice fell in a certain way, the Hebrews believed that God was answering in the affirmative; if another way, it meant the negative. This was the only way, so far as the records show, in which David talked with God. This may seem formal and even crude to us, but there can be no question that David was a sincerely religious man.

4. The Eloquent Plea of Abigail.

During his outlaw life, David was obliged to depend for supplies upon the wealthy farmers or shepherds, whose property he would protect from the invaders in return for the food. Professor Phelps describes an instance of this sort: "It seems that he (David) and his followers had protected the property of a rich farmer named Nabal; being in need of food, David sent his young men to this plutocrat, requesting assistance. Nabal was a hard-bitten old skinflint, and he said, 'Who is David? Am I going to hand over my goods to a runaway servant?' When this message was brought back, the impulsive and passionate young leader flew into a tempest of rage and sallied out to destroy Nabal, his family and his entire possessions. There is no doubt that he would have done this if it had not been for Nabal's pretty wife Abigail. She secretly took an enormous heap of costly provisions, and went to meet the avenger. David was extremely susceptible to beauty, and when this "woman of good understanding and of a beauti-

ful countenance'' looked him in the eyes and spoke flatteringly and soothingly, he melted like snow in the sunshine. She was as fair in speech as in face; she said: 'The soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God.' David blessed her for coming, and for saving him from the guilt of murder. She returned home.''

The plea of Abigail is one of the literary masterpieces of the Old Testament. Note the conciliatory approach to the angry David, the conciseness of the speech, the choice diction, and the beautiful figures. We recall that other women have been credited with beautiful parts of the Old Testament: Miriam with Exodus 15, and Deborah with Judges 5.

5. David's Forgiving Love.

Saul continued his unrelenting pursuit of the youthful David. More than once David, who was a more skilful warrior than Saul, had the king within his power, but refused to capture him or harm him in any way. The incident in I Samuel 26:1-25 is an excellent example of the generosity of David.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

In what respects were the careers of the individual David and the nation Israel successful?
What was the secret of their success?
What was the awful penalty inflicted on the priests and people of Nob for unknowingly helping David in his flight?
Point out on the map the location of Gibeah, Nob, and Adullam.
Name a good deed and a bad deed of David during his outlaw life.
Describe David's method of prayer.
How did David's outlaw band secure their food?
Tell the story of Nabal.
Read the plea of Abigail, and make a list of its literary qualities with references to the most beautiful passages.

Chapter XXII

DAVID'S ELEGY

The witch of Endor. I Samuel 28:4-20.
The death of Saul and Jonathan. I Samuel 31:1-13.
David's Elegy. II Samuel 1:19-27.

1. Introduction. The Historical Setting of the Elegy.

The armies of the Philistines and Hebrews were encamped in the valley of Esdraelon, facing each other on the slopes of Mt. Gilboa. Saul's courage failing, the night before the battle, he went down to the little village of Endor to consult a spiritualistic medium. She called up the dead prophet Samuel, and interpreted his message to the king as follows: "The Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand and given it to David, because thou obeyest not the voice of the Lord."

The next day Saul and Jonathan lost their lives on Mt. Gilboa. To commemorate their memories David wrote an elegy of which Professor Wild, in her *Literary Guide to the Bible,* says: "This is one of the most famous and beautiful elegies in all literature. Taken against the historical background of First Samuel and the account of David's relation with Saul and Jonathan, its noble spirit is more clearly apparent."

William Lyon Phelps, in discussing the elegy on Saul and Jonathan, calls attention to two fine qualities in the character of David.

"There were two fine qualities in David that were never understood even by those closest to him; one was his reverential loyalty to King Saul, the other the strength of his family affection. Both were greater than his concern for his personal glory or safety. Nearly all men have been glad to learn of the death of their enemies, especially when an immediate advantage rises from it. Julius Caesar and David—both humane—are the notable exceptions. David was at Ziklag one day when a messenger came from the field of battle, bearing the news that Saul was dead and saying that he, the messenger, had, at the king's request, killed him. To the astonishment of the visitor, David was struck with horror. Wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the Lord's anointed? And he had the man killed on the spot. . . . . Then he composed an elegiac poem for Saul and Jonathan, which, in immortal phrase, sets forth the passion of loyalty and friendship."

2. The Structure of the Elegy.

This poem was taken by the author of Samuel from an ancient collection of poems called the *Book of Jashar*. This collection, and another entitled the *Book of the Wars of Jehovah*, are the only collections of poems which are quoted by name in the earlier books of the Bible; but the references (Num. 21:27; Num. 21:14; Josh. 10:12; 2 Sam. 1:19; 1 Ks. 8:12) prove that such anthologies were being made in Israel as early as the time of David.

A translation by Professor Kent, based on a revision of the Hebrew text, runs as follows:

Weep, O Judah!
Grieve, O Israel!
On thy heights are the slain!
How have the mighty fallen!

Tell it not in Gath,
Declare it not in the streets of Askelon;
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised exult.

Ye mountains of Gilboa, may no dew descend,
Nor rain upon you, O ye fields of death!
For there was the shield of the mighty cast away,
The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.
From the blood of the slain,
From the fat of the mighty,
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
The sword of Saul returned not empty.

Saul and Jonathan, the beloved and the lovely!
In life and in death they were not parted;
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.

Daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you daintily in fine linen,
Who put golden ornaments on your garments (and say):
How have the mighty fallen in the midst of battle!

Jonathan, in thy death hast thou wounded me!
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan!
Thou wert surpassingly dear to me,
Thy love to me was far more than the love of woman!

How have the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished!

We see in this poem the beginnings of the elegiac rhythm which did not reach its perfection until five hundred years later when the Book of Lamentations was written. Lamentations 1:1-3, for example, is an illustration of the perfect form of the elegy, each line having five accented syllables, with a logical pause after the third.

How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people!
She is become as a widow, that was great among the nations!
She that was a princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary!

A solemn effect was produced when reading this aloud by dropping the voice after the third beat in each line and letting the tone fall away to almost silence at the end. David's Elegy approaches this

complete elegiac form in line 4 of stanza 6, and in the couplet which ends the poem. By grouping together three lines, selected from different parts of the poem, it is easy to see the growth of the elegiac strain through the successive stanzas.

How have the mighty fallen!
How have the mighty fallen—in the midst of the battle!
How have the mighty fallen—and the weapons of war perished!

Note, also, that the poem opens with a stanza in the quick, two-beat measure, which gradually rises to the three and four beat measure, and closes with a long, five-beat elegiac line. This produces the effect of power. In addition to this quality of power, and to the element of pathos produced by the elegiac strain, note the beautiful phrases that cling to the memory in verses 23, 25 and 26.

3. The Teachings of the Poem.

Friendship and loyalty are beautifully expressed in these lines, but deeper than these sentiments is the spirit of forgiving love manifest in David's eulogy of Saul. For we must remember that they were written by David in honor of his most deadly enemy, Saul having repeatedly tried to murder David.

The historical records of Jonathan's friendship for David add pathos to the expressions of David's grief, and help the reader appreciate this wonderful friendship. David's tribute to Jonathan is more beautiful and touching than the famous tribute in English literature written by Tennyson in memory of Arthur Hallam.

My Arthur, whom I shall not see
'Til all my widowed race be run;
Dear as the mother to the son,
More than my brothers are to me!

Browning has put into David's mouth words about King Saul—that big, generous, impulsive, fallible man—which find a response in every mind.

"O Saul, it shall be
A face like my face that receives thee; a Man like to me,
Thou shalt love and be loved by, for ever; a Hand like this hand
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See the Christ stand!"

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Tell in detail the story of the Witch of Endor.

Describe the battle in which Saul and Jonathan perished.

What estimate do Professors Wild and Phelps place on David's Elegy?

Where did the historian of Israel find this elegy?

What is the elegiac rhythm and where is there a perfect example of it?

Write in your notebooks a description of the elegiac strain that runs through David's Elegy.

How is the effect of power produced in this poem?

Read the elegy aloud, seeking to produce the effect intended by the author.

What are the main teachings of the poem?

Write four lines of David's Elegy that are more beautiful than the four lines quoted from Tennyson's *In Memoriam*.

What is one explanation of the more beautiful philosophy of life in Browning's *Saul* than in David's Elegy?

Chapter XXIII

HOW JERUSALEM BECAME THE HOLY CITY

Bringing the ark to the city. 2 Samuel 6.
A parallel account in Chronicles. 1 Chronicles 13 and 15.
The anthem at the gate. Psalm 24:7-10.

1. Historical Introduction.

For more than seven years David had been king at Hebron, having authority over Judah alone. This authority had been greatly limited by the powerful and hostile Philistines, who were near neighbors. After the death of Saul and of Saul's son, the northern tribes asked David to rule also over them. This gave David a large territory and a kingdom capable of taking a place among the nations of the Orient.

The capture of Jerusalem from the Jebusites (2 Sam. 5:6-10) gave David a city suitable for his capital. The possession of this city was the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the Hebrews, and in the history of humanity. A wonderful succession of events, recalled to our minds by the names of Solomon, Isaiah, Nebuchadrezzar, Cyrus the Great, Alexander the Great, Pompey, the Crusaders, and General Allenby, has thrown a halo around Jerusalem so that we now call it the Holy City. The whole world respected General Allenby when in December, 1917, upon taking possession of the city for the Allies, he went in through the gates on foot and with head uncovered.

After taking possession of the city, David had a

tent erected in which to place the Ark, the holy symbol of Israel's faith, but the Ark was in the hands of the Philistines. More than twenty years before this it had been rashly carried into battle and lost. David showed the instincts of a statesman as well as the devotion of a religious man by making it his first business to dignify his capital by the presence of the Ark of God.

2. The Story of the Return of the Ark.

David forms a procession of thirty thousand people, including soldiers and bands of music, and goes to Baal-Judah to bring the Ark to Jerusalem. They secure the sacred symbol, and put it upon a new cart which is drawn by a yoke of oxen. The procession starts back with a blare of trumpets and great rejoicing on the part of all the people.

At the threshing floor of Nacon, the oxen stumble over a rough place in the road and the Ark seems likely to tip over. Uzzah hastily puts up his hand to steady it, but no sooner does he touch the holy symbol than he falls dead. In great fear, David removes the Ark to a house nearby and the procession returns in silence and superstitious dread to Jerusalem.

Three months later, upon hearing that the house where the Ark was had been greatly blessed, David renews his effort to secure the sacred symbol. This time by the advice of the priests, the Ark is carried on staves by Levites. After the procession advances six paces with the Ark and no fatalities occur, a sacrifice is offered. Moulton suggests that it would have been very appropriate for the choirs to have sung Psalm 30 at this point.

When the procession reaches the base of the hill

on which Jerusalem rests, another halt is made, so Moulton suggests, and Psalm 24:1-6 is chanted. Then at the top of the hill, close to the gate of the city, a formal ceremony is enacted. One choir is stationed within the city gates and another without, and they chant antiphonally Psalm 24:7-10.

First Choir (outside the gates):
Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors,
And the King of glory will come in.

Second Choir (inside the closed gates):
Who is the King of glory?

First Choir:
Jehovah, strong and mighty,
Jehovah, mighty in battle.
Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
Yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors;
And the King of glory will come in.

Second Choir:
Who is this King of glory?

First Choir:
Jehovah of hosts,
He is the King of glory.

At the phrase "Jehovah of hosts," which proved to be the watchword, the gates open and the procession moves with the Ark to the sacred tent where the symbol of God's presence is reverently installed.

The parallel account in Chronicles, written 300 years later, adds some interesting details to the story.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Why is Jerusalem called the Holy City?

Tell the story of the installation of the Ark in Jerusalem.

Write in your notebooks items added to 2 Samuel 6 by Chronicles 13 and 15.

Write a verse from Psalm 30 which is especially appropriate in connection with the sacrifice at the beginning of the second attempt to restore the Ark.

Write a verse from Psalm 24:1-6, appropriate to this occasion.

Was David wise in inaugurating religious ceremonies in his realm?

Is the observance of form necessary to the preservation of religion?

Chapter XXIV

THE INGRATITUDE OF A ROYAL SON

Absalom's rebellion. II Samuel 15:1-18:33.

1. Introduction. The Testimony of Hall Caine.

This is a most illuminating story and contains the materials and suggestions for an interesting historical novel. Its character studies, its mention of famous places, and its allusions to the national history make it one of the most important descriptions in the Old Testament. Some Hall Caine should use it in writing a novel. McClure's Magazine contains the testimony of Hall Caine to the suggestiveness of the Bible to the writer of fiction: "There is no book in the world like it (the Bible), and the finest novels ever written fall far short in interest of any of the stories it tells. Whatever strong situations I have in my books are not of my creation, but are taken from the Bible. *The Deemster* is the story of the Prodigal Son. *The Bondman* is the story of Esau and Jacob. *The Scapegoat* is the story of Eli and his sons, but with Samuel as a little girl; and *The Manxman* is the story of David and Uriah."

2. A Type of the Biblical Short Story.

This story of Absalom may be considered as a typical example of the short story. It is surprising when one comes to think of it how many such stories there are in our Bible, and how great is their literary beauty. Professor Wild says of them, "Two

elements are quite apparent, namely, simplicity and earnestness of purpose which brings in the zest of enthusiasm. Add to this, beauty and rhythm of style and an almost perfect story is accomplished. This rhythmical, poetical element is especially apparent in biblical stories.''

A good short story usually has a hero, a character in opposition, and supporting friends on either side. Read the fine characterization of the persons in the story of Absalom in the following passages: David the hero is described in 2 Sam. 15:30; 15:24, 25; 18:5, 29-33. Absalom, the villain, is finely set forth in 15:1-6, and in other parts of the story. As examples of the author's treatment of the other characters, study Ittai (15:19-23), Hushai (15:32-37; 17:6-13), Ahithophel (16:23; 17:23).

3. The Development of the Plot.

Students of the Bible are so unaccustomed to approach the text in this way that it is well to analyze the plot of the rebellion of Absalom quite minutely in order to call attention to the large number of incidents and characters in the story. It is suggested that the class prepare to tell the story by the following outline.

1. Absalom gains popular favor. 15:1
2. The strong conspiracy at Hebron. 15:7-12
3. David forsakes his capital. 15:13-18
4. Ittai, the loyal follower. 15:19-24
5. David's self-denying refusal to take the Ark. 15:24-30
6. Hushai's secret mission. 15:32-37
7. Ziba's present. 16:1-4
8. Shimei curses David. 16:4-14.
9. Success of Hushai's mission. 16:15-17:14
10. The messengers elude Absalom's officers. 17:15-22

11. David's warm reception by the inhabitants of Mahanaim. 17:24-29
12. The battle between the forces of David and Absalom. 18:1-8
13. Tragic death of Absalom. 18:9-18
14. Tidings of the battle. 18:19-32
15. David's grief. 18:33-19:4
16. Joab rebukes David. 19:5-8

4. Outside Readings.

An interesting parallel to David's grief over the death of Absalom is found in Priam's lament over Hector in Homer's *Iliad,* Book XII, 11, lines 414 to 430.

The storm scene in Shakespeare's *King Lear* may be read in connection with 2 Samuel 15:23, 30. See also *The Death of Absalom* by N. P. Willis.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Name several other writers of fiction besides Hall Caine who have found suggestions for their stories in the Bible.

Name several short stories in the Bible.

What constitutes a good short story?

Study each incident in the story of Absalom and be able to give the substance of it when the title is named.

Discuss the question whether David or Absalom is the hero of this story.

Granting that Absalom had the good motive of making more efficient the administration of justice in his father's kingdom, does that justify his rebellion; in other words, does the end justify the means? Compare Matthew 4:8-10.

How did David's family ties threaten to interfere with the best interests of the state? See 18:33-19:8.

Give original examples from history or current life of the bad influence on the state of family favoritism.

Chapter XXV

THE EPIC OF JEROBOAM

The luxury and oppressions of King Solomon. I Kings 4:21-28; 5:13-18; 10:26-11:11.
Promotion of Jeroboam, the day-laborer. I Kings 11:26-28.
The rending of the garment and a prophecy. I Kings 11:29-39.
Jeroboam rebels and flees. I Kings 11:40.
A declaration of independence. I Kings 12:1-20.

1. Historical Setting.

Jeroboam was one of the common people that suffered oppression in the reign of the luxury-loving Solomon, who has been compared with Louis XIV in France. In his desire to rival neighboring nations in maintaining a brilliant court, Solomon assembled a large harem of women, of high rank or beautiful, and gathered in Jerusalem a large group of noble families, whose expenses were paid by the state. Horses, chariots, a large standing army, beautiful buildings, the royal entertainment of foreign and native guests, a household and palace retinue whose members ran into the thousands—all involved much labor and great expense. The king and the nobility revelled in luxury, while the masses suffered from poverty and forced labor. As Louis XIV planted the seeds that bore fruit in the French Revolution, so Solomon developed a system of social injustice that culminated in the rupture of the Hebrew monarchy. In this social and political revolution, Jeroboam, the hero of this chapter, bore a leading part.

2. The Septuagint adds to our Knowledge of Jeroboam.

The Hebrew historians in their natural desire to extol the great King Solomon have given scant space to the day laborer who became a boss-workman, and a factor in disrupting the kingdom. We welcome, therefore, three new items of information from the Septuagint, the invaluable Greek translation of the Old Testament, used by Jesus and his disciples, which was completed about 100 B. C. This translation states that Jeroboam had an ignoble birth in an obscure place in northern Israel, that he was leader in a labor-strike in Jerusalem, organizing in connection with it a force of 300 chariots, and that in Egypt he married a sister of the Pharaoh.

3. The Story of the Rending of the Garment.

One evening when the young labor boss, Jeroboam, was walking in a field outside the city of Jerusalem, he met an aged prophet, Ahijah. Now the prophet was wearing a new garment and to the astonishment of Jeroboam he rent the garment into twelve pieces, declaring that the kingdom of Solomon should be thus rent and ten tribes given to Jeroboam. This symbolic act appealed to the young man's ambitions and strengthened his opposition to the social injustice of Solomon.

4. The Declaration of Independence of the Northern Tribes.

When Solomon's foolish young son, Rehoboam, came to the throne, and went to Shechem in the north to receive the homage of the ten tribes, the

representatives of these tribes met him with a demand for better conditions of life for the common people. Rehoboam unwisely assumed a manner even more autocratic than Solomon, and thereby lost more than half of his kingdom. The northern tribes rebelled, sent for Jeroboam, and made him king at Shechem.

5. The Teachings.

Solomon disregarded the principle of social justice, stated so clearly in the remarkable verse in the prophecy of Micah (6:8). Theodore Roosevelt as a modern ruler stood in contrast with Solomon. Recall his acts as president with reference to (1) his personal relations with all classes and races; (2) oppressive monoplies in coal and other necessities on which the people were dependent; (3) the improvement of the living conditions of the farmers of the nation.

Jeroboam's rise from the ranks, and Rehoboam's loss of power, are excellent examples of the use and misuse of opportunity on the part of young men.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Compare the reign of King Solomon with that of Louis XIV in France.

What does the Septuagint contribute to our knowledge of Jeroboam?

Write in your notebook a brief essay on the Septuagint. You will find material for this in any cyclopoedia or Bible dictionary.

Tell in detail the story of the rending of the garment, prefixing an imaginary account of the circumstances.

Write a brief statement of the career of Jeroboam from his humble birth in northern Israel until his call to become king.

Give in detail an account of the Declaration of Independence of the ten tribes.

What great principle did Solomon and his son disregard and thus bring on the disruption of the kingdom? (See Micah 6:8) Memorize the verse.

Name one or more modern parallels to the career of Jeroboam.

What is the influence of wealth and luxurious surroundings on youth? Was Rehoboam wholly responsible for his failure?

Part 6

LITERARY SELECTIONS FROM THE PERIOD OF THE TWO RIVAL KINGDOMS FROM 937 TO 586 B. C.

Chapter XXVI

THE ELIJAH CYCLE

On Mount Carmel. I Kings 18:17-40.
The still, small voice. I Kings 19:1-14.
Naboth's vineyard. I Kings 21.

1. Elijah, Forerunner of the Bookmaking Prophets.

The meteor-like appearances of Elijah give to the cycle of stories which have clustered about his name an element of mystery and power. Elijah was a speaking prophet, giving his message in a few words which were indelibly impressed on his hearers. He reminds us of John the Baptist, not only in his character, but also in his mission as a forerunner. Elijah prepared the way for the wonderful regime of the great prophets like Amos and Isaiah. He was the herald of the principles of social justice.

This strange son of the desert deeply stirred the imagination of men by his dramatic deeds and his apparent control of the destinies of men. Soon after his death (approximately 850 B. C.) anecdotes about his amazing career were gathered together and handed down to successive generations. They form

a large part of 1 Kings 17 to 2 Kings 2. "These stories take us through thrilling adventures, proceeding from climax to climax."

From the Elijah Cycle we select three scenes which are typical of the career of this wild, solitary, and romantic character.

2. The Scene on Mount Carmel.

God had sent a drought upon the land because of the worship of the Tyrian Baal, which had been introduced by the imperious and wicked wife of Ahab. *Paradise Lost* alludes to this god and his female counterpart in the following terms:

> For those the race of Israel oft forsook
> Their Living Strength, and unfrequented left
> His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
> To bestial gods; for which their heads, as low
> Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear
> Of despicable foes.

The national distress brought Ahab to consult with the prophet of God. Elijah proposed a test to show whether God or Baal was worthy to be worshipped. Read the narrative in its three phases: the challenge, 18:2-24; failure of the prophets of Baal, 25-29; the vindication of Jehovah, 30-39. Note in the prayer of Elijah (vv. 36-37) the literary values of simplicity, humility, conviction, and purpose.

3. The Still, Small Voice.

The *New Century Bible* says: "Elijah is made to realize the presence of God in an experience which for grandeur and depth of conception could hardly be surpassed in literature. The Lord passes by arrayed in the terrors of storm, earthquake, and fire; but none of these brings home to the prophet the immediate sense of God. It is only in the audi-

ble stillness which succeeds the fire that he feels the mysterious attraction of the Divine, and, wrapping his face in his mantle, comes forth to the entrance of the cave.'' The student should put in his own words the three picturesque scenes of this incident: (1) verses 1-3, The angry queen and the despairing prophet; (2) verses 4-7, Under the juniper tree; (3) verses 9a, 12 to 14, Experiences in the mountain cave.

4. Naboth's Vineyard.

Here is a lecture on social justice, put into story form. Read the story by the following outline:

I Kings 21:1-4,	Naboth refuses to sell his home.
5-10,	Jezebel has a plan to get the vineyard.
11-13,	Naboth falsely accused in court.
14-16,	Ahab takes possession of the vineyard.
17-24,	Elijah curses Ahab and foretells Jezebel's terrible death.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Compare Elijah with John the Baptist.

Did Elijah write an account of his own life; if not, how did the record of his career become a part of our Old Testament?

What religious crisis forms the background of the scene on Mount Carmel?

Describe the scene on Mount Carmel in its three phases.

What four literary and religious values has the prayer of Elijah in verses 36 and 37?

Describe the three scenes in the episode of the ''still, small voice.''

Repeat the story of Naboth's Vineyard.

Memorize I Kings 19: 11, 12.

Read Whittier's *What the Voice Said* in connection with this chapter.

What oratorio is based on the subject of this chapter? Bring to the class quotations from the oratorio that illustrate its use of biblical passages.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE PROPHET IN KING'S COURTS

Saving a Syrian general. II Kings 5:1-19.
Winning a victory for Israel. II Kings 6:8-23.
Making a king in Damascus. II Kings 8:7-15.
Anointing Jehu king. II Kings 9:1-13.
The arrows of victory. II Kings 13:14-17.

1. Introduction. The Contrast between Elijah and Elisha.

The stories about Elisha are so often alluded to in modern literature that students should seek to know them well. Elisha was very different from Elijah. Elisha was the friend and counselor of many kings, and a social and friendly person, while Elijah was solitary, the enemy of kings, and a representative of the condemning and terrifying spirit of justice.

William Lyon Phelps, in his *Human Nature in the Bible,* says of Elisha:

> He is one of the grandest figures in Hebrew history. His importance and influence are marked by the extraordinary number of miracles he performed; his career was filled with amazing adventures. He must have found life tremendously interesting, for there was scarcely a day without excitement. Although his personality lacks the romantic gloom enveloping the lonely figure of Elijah, the disciple became more powerful than his teacher, exerting a deep influence on both Israelites and aliens. Seldom has so distinguished a career been told in so few words; the sayings and deeds of Elisha are immortal both in literature and in their moral influence; yet his entire biography covers only a dozen chapters in the Bible. The first meeting of Elijah and Elisha is charming. The former had

left the cave where he had listened to the still small voice, and had walked directly to a great farm. There he found Elisha, the son of Shaphat, plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth. Does this mean that the young man was driving twenty-four oxen in pairs before the plow? If so, he must have been a more skillful driver than Ben-Hur, and the soil must have been tougher than the Puritans found in New England.

2. Saving a Syrian General.

Henry Van Dyke has dramatized this story of Naaman in his *House of Rimmon,* which students should read in connection with this chapter. He gives much space in his drama to the little Hebrew maid who saved Naaman's life, and describes the Syrian general as a noble character with a fine spirit of worship. He makes Naaman say,

> Grant me a portion of the blessed soil
> Of this most favored land where I have found
> His mercy; in Damascus will I build
> An altar to his name, and praise Him there
> Morning and night.

Arrange the Bible story in five scenes: (1) 5:1-4, Palace in Damascus; (2) 5-8, Consternation in the palace at Samaria; (3) 10-12, Naaman before the cottage of Elisha; (4) 13, 14, By the river Jordan; (5) 15-19, A new altar.

3. Winning a Victory for Israel.

In this incident the outstanding facts are: Syria with its capital at Damascus is at war with Israel, of which the capital was Samaria; the curious deliverance of Israel from time to time, which the king of Syria suspects was due to treachery; the thwarting of the night attempt to capture Elisha; and the bloodless victory secured by Elisha.

Special attention should be called to the art of

the writer in making such skillful use of the element of surprise. See verses 12, 17, 22.

4. Making a King in Damascus.

The healing of Naaman must have given Elisha a great reputation in Damascus. Observe the expensive gifts which the king at Damascus made to Elisha on the occasion of the latter's visit to the city. It is difficult to explain Elisha's power over the destiny of the royal house of Damascus, or, if you prefer, his foresight and power of predicting future events.

5. The Anointing of Jehu.

Jehu, the captain of a company of Israelites guarding Israel's frontier at Ramoth-Gilead, is sitting before his tent after the evening meal. A messenger, sent by the prophet Elisha, comes running to him, asks him to step inside the tent, and there anoints him as the next king of Israel. The messenger then gives Jehu a charge to destroy the whole house of Ahab, and disappears as mysteriously as he came.

6. The Arrows of Victory.

This is the last scene in the life of the patriot-prophet. The king of Israel himself has come to the little white cottage near Samaria to visit Elisha in his illness. He praises the prophet and pays him a great tribute. Elisha, thus called back for a moment to the thoughts of his beloved country, for which he has worked and planned through over fifty years of strenuous activity, asks that the window of his room, looking toward Damascus, be opened,

places his hands upon those of the king, and bids his royal master shoot the Lord's arrow of victory.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Contrast Elijah and Elisha.

What tribute does William Lyon Phelps pay to Elisha.

Tell the story of Naaman.

Write in your notebooks an outline of II Kings 6:8-23.

How does the author use the element of surprise in this story?

Picture Elisha's reception at Damascus.

Write an outline of Jehu's career, as you find it in different parts of the Old Testament.

Describe in detail the last scene in the life of Elisha.

Find in the story of Naaman two examples of the importance of little things in determining the destiny of a life.

What is the meaning of the symbol of the "horses and chariots" in II Kings 6:17?

What did king Joash mean by his statement in II Kings 13:14, "my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof".

From Milton's *Paradise Lost, Book* 1, write in your notebooks a quotation of ten lines concerning the leper Naaman, worshipper of the god Rimmon.

Chapter XXVIII

ISAIAH, THE YOUNG PROPHET AND POET

The story of his call. Isaiah 6.
Parable of the vineyard. Isaiah 5:1-7.
A psalm of triumph. Psalm 46.

1. The New Epoch in Literature and Religion.

Between the middle of the eighth and sixth centuries before Christ, a galaxy of orators and writers appeared that has not been surpassed in literary brilliancy and historical effectiveness in any equal period in human history. Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah were the first men to write complete books in Israel; they were the first to break away from the ritualistic religion of the ancients; and they laid the foundations of Christianity and of modern thought about God, man's religious duty, and the ideals of social justice.

In the thought of the world, Isaiah stands out above all these prophets as the greatest leader in religion and literature before the time of Christ. Bewer says; "The splendor of his diction, the wealth of his imagery, the amazing variety of his style, now grand and majestic, powerful and sweeping, now gentle and sweet, moving as if full of silent tears, mark him out as the prince of Hebrew orators. But he was greater than his style and his words. He had penetrated through outward appearances to the underlying reality, had seen the One who directs all movements of history, had understood His character and purpose, and thus was enabled to inter-

pret Him to his people and to unfold His plan in the events of the nations.''

2. The Story of Isaiah's Call.

The young man who was to play so great a part in Israel's life was called to his high service by a great national loss. It was announced one morning that the king was dead. Jerusalem was deeply moved, even as England was at the death of Queen Victoria. Among the throng that filled the palace to pay the last tribute of respect before the bier of the dead sovereign was the patriotic young Jew, Isaiah, who was himself of noble lineage, and possibly a relative of the king.

From the palace Isaiah, burdened with the sense of tragedy and with the feeling that his little nation was now passing through a crisis, went to the temple to pray. Then his call came to him in a remarkable vision which he wrote out, years later, and which we now find in chapter 6 of his prophecies. A. R. Gordon, in *The Prophets of the Old Testament*, gives a good description of the vision.

> As he prayed, the outward symbolism of worship vanished, and the eternal realities themselves were unveiled before his spiritual imagination. In the holy place, where the Ark stood as the emblem of the Divine, he now saw the Lord Jahweh seated as King upon a throne ''high and lifted up,'' beyond all contact with human imperfection and sin, the skirts of His flowing robes filling the Temple — in other words, His royal presence permeating the santuary and going out thence to bless and gladden the world. Around His throne the choirs that pealed out their joyous music in the Temple seemed now transformed into shining companies of seraphim, whose voices were raised in responsive chorus:
>
> Holy, holy, holy is Jahweh of hosts;
> The whole earth is full of His glory.

But not by lip alone did these bright spirits minister to their King. Each one had six wings—two to cover his face, in token of reverence, two to cover his "feet" (the lower parts of his body), a delicate suggestion of purity, and two for flight, to speed on His Divine commissions "o'er land and ocean without rest"—the three pairs thus finely symbolizing the threefold worship that God loves and expects of His children—reverence, purity and service. The sight of such transcendent holiness, Isaiah could not yet endure. In his nervous dread the very foundations of the threshold seemed to shake beneath him, and a great cloud arose to obstruct his gaze—the darkness of his own impurity showing thick and black before the dazzling radiance of God's glory. And for the moment he felt himself undone. "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell amidst a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, even Jahweh of hosts."

Visions have been characteristic of great religious leaders. Paul, Savonarola, Luther, and Christ (in the wilderness) had mental experiences which they afterwards described to their followers in words that moved them to action. Isaiah's call as given in chapter 6 had several elements that are typical: he had a vision of God, a sense of his unworthiness and of God's forgiving love: he saw the needs of humanity, and then, in a self-denying spirit, volunteered for service.

3. The Parable of the Vineyard.

Isaiah's personality, oratorical ability, and unusual poetic gift enabled him to make a deep impression on his generation; but the most surprising thing to us is the wide variety of methods which he used in seeking to influence public opinion. We see him preaching a wonderful sermon from the temple steps as in chapter 2, or carrying through the streets of Jerusalem a great poster inscribed,

"Speed, spoil, hurry, prey" as in chapter 8, or fearlessly rebuking the king and the court in a public place as in chapter 7, or "walking naked and barefoot" as in chapter 20, or chanting the words of his message, set to a popular song, as in chapter 5.

This parable of the vineyard in chapter 5 was given in some big vineyard near the city or perhaps in the city square, in the time of the grape harvest. We can imagine how easily a crowd was gathered in those ancient days when there was so little to attract attention. Isaiah chants his parable, and, when the people have become interested, he applies the warning it contains directly to the crowd. By a most effective play on words, he made the lesson stick in their memory.

> For the vineyard of Yahweh of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant:
> And He looked for justice (mishpat), but behold oppression (mispah), for righteousness (sedhakah), but behold a cry (seakah).

4. A Psalm of Triumph.

This psalm has been frequently credited to Isaiah and is very appropiate to one of the great occasions of his life. In 701 B. C. Sennacherib, king of Assyria, invaded Palestine and threatened to destroy utterly Judah and Jerusalem. Two hundred thousand strong, and with a reputation of reckless cruelty, this army inspired terror in the hearts of all the Hebrews. The officers demanded that the gates of Jerusalem be opened, but Hezekiah delayed and asked counsel of the prophet Isaiah. The prophet prayed for guidance himself, and then assured Hezekiah that God would save the city. Next morning, it was found that a plague had destroyed much of

the enemy's forces and had frightened the rest away. See a full account in 2 Kings 18:13-19:37, and the parallel account in Chronicles, and also in Isaiah 37. An Assyrian tablet has been discovered which seems to verify this remarkable story of the destruction of the army.

Psalm 46 was chanted by the choirs, as a great procession went to the temple to celebrate this extraordinary deliverance of the city.

> God is our refuge and strength
> A very present help in trouble.

This psalm is very symmetrical having three stanzas of equal length, the last stanzas being followed by the refrain,

> Jehovah of hosts is with us,
> The God of Jacob is our refuge.

This refrain is missing from the first stanza and without doubt was dropped accidentally in the process of transmission.

The religious teachings of this psalm are many and helpful. Perhaps the most unusual is that contained in verse 4, which is a figure of God's grace based on the channel of water that flowed into Jerusalem from a spring outside and upon which the whole city depended in time of siege.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Describe the importance of Isaiah as one of the leaders in a new epoch of literature and religion.

What was the occasion of the call of Isaiah?

Describe that call and mention the four most important elements in it.

Do you think that Isaiah was in a state of trance, or are we to interpret chapter 6 as a figurative description of a mental experience?

Name some of the strange methods which Isaiah used in his public work.

How do we know that Isaiah 5 is a parable?

Write in your notebooks an analysis of the parable and make the application to the life of the people.

From II Kings 18:13-19:37, write in your notebooks the historical setting of Psalm 46.

Show how each stanza of the psalm fits the historical situation.

Make a list of the figures of speech in the psalm.

Explain the religious message of verse 4.

What elements of Isaiah's call to service enter the experience of a Student Volunteer?

Part 7

LITERARY SELECTIONS WITH THE BABYLONIAN EXILE AS A BACKGROUND

Chapter XXIX

THE POETRY OF HOPE

Comfort for the exiles. Isaiah 4:2-6.
A song of hope. Psalms 42 and 43.

1. There is a striking Difference between the Bible and Pagan Literature.

The Bible writers were full of hope for the future while the Greek and Roman writers believed that the world was growing worse every year. "No more precious legacy of thought has come down to us from antiquity than this Hebrew conception of a golden age to come. It is difficult to overestimate the bracing moral influence of an ideal future. The classic thought of Greece and Rome took an opposite course; their age of gold was in the remote past; the progress of time was a decline." (*Modern Reader's Bible*)

Two examples from Rome are given here.

Juvenal wrote, "A ninth age of the world is ours, in wickedness greater than that of iron"; and Horace declared,

"Our fathers, worse in their day than our grandsires,

Begot us a still more degenerate race;
And soon will a worse brood than we are succeed us."

We have reason to be grateful that Browning, Tennyson, Alfred Noyes, and other modern poets who know the Bible so intimately have been dominated by this element of hope. Two selections from Browning will illustrate this.

I find earth not gray, but rosy,
Heaven not grim but fair of hue;
Do I stoop I pick a posy,
Do I stand and stare? all's blue.

My own hope is, a sun will pierce
The thickest cloud earth ever stretched;
That after Last returns the First,
Though a wide compass round be fetched;
That what began best can't end worst,
Nor what God blest once prove accurst.

2. Comfort for the Exiles.

From the many messages of hope in the Old Testament we select for this chapter one from Second Isaiah and one from an unknown poet of the exile. Israel has been away from the beautiful temple and the Holy City for many years. In Babylon the Jews find themselves among a rich and properous heathen population; polytheism with its gorgeous temples and magnificent worship is disheartening to the faithful Israelites. They frequently hear the mocking heathen say, "Where is now their God?" As the years pass by, many Jews yield to the temptation to adopt the Babylonian customs, including the religion; but a remnant in Israel remains faithful, and to them the Great Unknown Prophet of the exile comes with this wonderful message in Isaiah

4:2-6. He promises that a day shall come when their broken nation shall be restored to its old-time glory and happiness. The homeland shall again become fruitful and be under the special protection of the only true God.

This passage is called Messianic, because it forms a part of that famous group of foreshadowings of the future, examples of which are found in Isaiah 2:2-4; 7:14; 9:6,7; 11:1-9; Micah 5:2. These prophecies unite two great expectations: the coming of a perfect kingdom of God on earth, and the appearance of a personal Messiah. Observe that "branch" and the "escaped of Israel" in Isaiah 4:2 refer respectively to the people of Judah, and the exiles who have returned from Babylon.

3. A Song of Hope.

In some way unknown to us one poem with the keynote "Hope thou in God," and with the same theme, style, and spirit throughout, has been divided in our Psalter into Psalms 42 and 43. Probably the division took place at an early date for the purpose of the temple worship. It is divided into three parts by the refrain,

> Why art thou cast down, O my soul?
> Why art thou disquieted within me?
> Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him,
> Who is the help of my countenance and my God.

This poem is notable for its striking figures of speech (see 42:1,2,3,7) and for its tone of hope, maintained under most depressing conditions. In verse 1 there is a perfect example of progressive or synthetic parallelism, in which the second line builds up the thought of the first, giving an additional

thought on the same note. An element of pathos appears in 42:6,7, where the poet calls to mind the familiar hills, which were the last thing visible as he was going into exile, and the noise of their waterfalls which still resounded in his ears.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Describe and explain the hopefulness of the Bible writers in contrast with classic authors of Greece and Rome.

Memorize one of the quotations from Browning.

Picture the historical background of the two selections in this chapter.

Why is Isaiah 4:2-6 called Messianic?

Make a study of passages from Isaiah and Micah listed in point 2 and write in your notebooks the prophecies which describe the coming kingdom and in a separate list those that predict the coming of the Messiah.

Make the attempt to arrange in verse form Isaiah 4:2-6.

Give the evidence that Psalms 42 and 43 originally formed one poem.

Give in your notebooks an example of a figure of speech and a progressive parallelism.

Show that the same thought is continued through the poem.

How is the optimism of the Hebrews illustrated in both the selections of this chapter?

Compare the worth of the optimistic and pessimistic views of life.

Read Mathew Arnold's *Dover Beach* as a classic example of the latter.

Chapter XXX

SOME ADVENTURES OF DANIEL AT THE BABYLONIAN COURT

Three conscientious objectors. Daniel 1.
The feast of Belshazzar. Daniel 5.
Daniel in the lion's den. Daniel 6.

1. Historical Setting.

In studying wonderful old stories like these, we should distinguish between the circumstances under which the stories were first told and the new occasions which influenced the author to put them into written form.

The ancient hero, Daniel, had his remarkable visions, according to the traditional view, during the Babylonian exile in the years following 597 B. C. Modern scholars believe that these visions were first put into written form hundreds of years later, when the Jews were suffering at the hands of the Greeks under Antiochus Epiphanes, who had his official residence in Antioch, Syria. These remarkable experiences of Daniel were written for the encouragement and strengthening of the Jews that they might endure the awful persecutions without giving up their faith in Jehovah. The Greek king offered every inducement to the people, the opportunities of financial gain through trade, of a life of pleasure, and of Greek culture, in order to lure them from the faith of their fathers. When they refused, he levelled the city walls, tortured and murdered many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and

made life almost unendurable to the faithful. To them the book of Daniel was a great support, and was probably a decisive factor in the preservation of the Jewish nation. The approximate date of the book is 165 B. C.

2. The Conscientious Objectors.

Daniel 1 tells the story of four Jewish young men of noble birth, fine physique, and good education who were selected by the king of Babylon that they might be specially trained for high office in his court. We should remember how dazzling and attractive the city of Babylon, with its hanging gardens, glittering temples, broad streets, and wonderful canals, plentifully supplied with water by the Euphrates, was to boys who had been brought up in the little rock-bound city of Jerusalem. It is no wonder that they were tempted to be disloyal to their own customs when in a great foreign city they were offered a chance to prepare for high office in the brilliant court of Nebuchadrezzar. Read the story, noting the reason for their refusal to eat the choice food and to drink the wine from the king's tablet. The real reason was that the food, having been offered to idols, would, according to Hebrew law, "defile" them. Compare 1 Corinthians 8:1.

3. The Feast of Belshazzar.

Cyrus the Great, having conquered the rest of the eastern world, came at last to take the city of Babylon. On the very night before the fall of the city, the royal family and the nobility with their guests had a riotous banquet which is described in Daniel 5. Heine, in his *Belshazzar* describes it vividly.

The Midnight hour was drawing nigh;
Babylon slumbered silently.
But in the palace of the King
Was flaring light and rioting.
Aloft there in the monarch's hall
Belshazzar held high festival.
His minions sat in gleaming line
And drained the cups of sparkling wine.
The King's cheeks flame as red as blood,
And wine hath made him bold of mood,
And blindly urges him along
To blaspheme God with impious tongue.
But scarce was the daring taunt expressed
Ere secret terror filled the King's breast.
The strident laughter died away;
Over all a death-like silence lay.
And see! and see! on the wall above,
A ghostly hand begins to move.

Read the story by the following analysis.

5:1-4, Belshazzar and his lords drink to the praise of their idols in the Hebrew golden vessels, taken from the Temple at Jerusalem.

5-9, The handwriting on the wall.

10-12, The queen counsels the calling of Daniel.

13-16, Belshazzer offers gifts if Daniel will interpret the vision.

17-30, The interpretation.

4. Daniel in the Lion's Den.

Daniel not only refused to worship according to the Babylonian decree, but also kept on praying to his own God without any attempt at concealment. He courageously met the test of faith, as many have done since his day. It is helpful to remember in this connection the story of Perpetua and Felicitas in the second century, of Savonarola in Italy, and Martin Luther in Germany.

Tell the story, noting the skillful use of the ele-

ment of suspense, and the dramatic and vivid character of the narrative.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

What was the original setting of the stories of Daniel?

What use of them was later made by the author of our present Book of Daniel?

Write in your notebooks the outline of Daniel 1.

Explain the refusal of the young men to eat the food from the king's table.

What military situation makes the Feast of Belshazzar specially untimely?

Tell the story of the feast.

Explain the wide use of this story in the literature of the world.

Look up Edwin Arnold's *Belshazzar's Feast*, Byron's *Vision of Belshazzar*, and Felicia Heman's *Feast of Belshazzar*.

Write in your notebooks an account of the literary features of Daniel in the Lion's Den.

Write in your notebooks what you regard as the three most important religious teachings in the stories of this chapter.

Chapter XXXI

THE SONG OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT

He hath borne our griefs. Isaiah 52:13-53:12.

1. Literary Features of the Prophecy.

In order to appreciate this most remarkable prophetic poem of the Old Testament, it is helpful to read it in the translation by George Adam Smith, which, with headings prefixed to each stanza, is given here.

My Servant Shall Prosper

Behold, my Servant shall prosper,
Shall rise, be lift up, be exceedingly high.
Like as they that were astonied before thee were many,
—So marred from a man's was his visage,
And his form from the children of men!—
So shall the nations he startles be many,
Before him shall kings shut their mouths.
For that which had never been told them they see,
And what they had heard not, they have to consider.

Who Hath Believed

Who gave believing to that which we heard,
And the arm of Jehovah to whom was it bared?
For he sprang like a sapling before Him,
As a root from the ground that is parched;
He had no form nor beauty that we should regard him,
Nor aspect that we should desire him.
Despised and rejected of men,
Man of pains and familiar with ailing,
And as one we do cover the face from,
Despised, and we did not esteem him.

Surely He Hath Borne

Surely our ailments he bore,
And our pains he did take for his burden.
But we—we accounted him stricken,
Smitten of God and degraded.
Yet he—he was pierced for crimes that were ours,
He was crushed for guilt that was ours,
The chastisement of our peace was upon him,
By his stripes healing is ours.
Of us all like to sheep went astray,
Every man to his way we did turn,
And Jehovah made light upon him
The guilt of us all.

He Was Oppressed

Oppressed, he did humble himself,
Nor opened his mouth—
As a lamb to the slaughter is led,
As a sheep 'fore her shearers is dumb—
Nor opened his mouth.
By tyranny and law was he taken;
And of his age who reflected,
That he was wrenched from the land of the living,
For My people's transgressions the stroke was on him?
So they made with the wicked his grave,
Yea, with the felon his tomb.
Though never harm had he done,
Neither was guile in his mouth.

Yet It Pleased Jehovah

But Jehovah had purposed to bruise him,
Had laid on him sickness;
So if his life should offer guilt offering,
A seed he should see, he should lengthen his days.
And the purpose of Jehovah by his hand should prosper,
From the travail of his soul shall he see,
By his knowledge be satisfied.
My Servant, the Righteous, righteousness wins he for many,
And their guilt he takes for his load.
Therefore I set him a share with the great,
Yea, with the strong shall he share the spoil;
Because that he poured out his life unto death,
Let himself with transgressors be reckoned;
Yea, he the sin of the many hath borne,
And for the transgressors he interposes.

Someone has said of this poem, "Words beautiful, enthralling words, familiar words, vibrant in tone, rich in color, moving in pathos, exalted in diction."

Among the many interesting features of these verses, note first the increase in the length of the successive stanzas, which produces the impression of increasing power and solemnity of the thought, sweeping forward in the resistless volume of truth. Second, the unusual effect produced by the use of the pronouns. In the third stanza, for example, "our" and "he" are repeatedly used in contrast. Third, the style is smooth, flowing, even redundant, in contrast with First Isaiah whose language is abrupt, brilliant, and terse.

2. The Historical Background.

This poem, like every other great piece of literature, grew out of a deep experience of life. The author was born among a group of Hebrews, who had been torn away from their own home in Jerusalem, and thrown into the midst of a great heathen population.

During fifty years the Hebrews had lived in Babylon where they had been deprived of their religious privileges and their political rights. They were now misunderstood, despised, and without hope. (See Psalm 137 and Isaiah 48:20). Yet, during the whole period of exile, that group of people which was faithful to the old religion believed that God had created Israel for a great purpose. For the sake of comforting this group, and strengthening them in their high purpose of rebuilding Jerusalem and carrying on their great mission, the Second Isaiah wrote his prophecy.

3. The Message.

Bewer, in his *Literature of the Old Testament* says:

> "We cannot cloud the glory of his essential message, which is so great that we are still thrilled by it, especially when we read those four poems in which he worked out his own original contribution with singular beauty and magnanimity, the so-called Poems of the Servant of Yahweh, (Isa. 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12), which we have not touched upon so far. Here a profound interpretation of Israel's suffering is given in the light of her mission. The problem of innocent suffering is solved by fixing the attention upon its purpose, not upon the reason for it. Israel is the servant of Yahweh. He is now despised and crushed, without national existence, far from his own land, in exile. But he is still Yahweh's servant, through whom true religion is to be established in all the world. It seems impossible. All this work in exile must be vain; it means but suffering and shame. But no, this very suffering is part of Yahweh's plan! Through it His purpose for the world will be accomplished."

Who is the "Servant" that, as George Adam Smith says, haunts this whole prophecy like a ghost? No one can answer that question. W. J. Hutchins believes: "Neither Israel, nor the Inner Circle of Israelites nor yet Jeremiah, fills full the ideal presented here of the Suffering, Saving Servant of Jehovah. The idea that the prophet looked forward consciously down the centuries to the cross of Jesus' death, the garden of his burial, and his resurrection, may not perhaps be dogmatically denied, yet cannot be defended. But Jesus incarnated, enfleshed the ideal of the prophet."

While we cannot identify the "Servant," yet the great idea which he personified is clear. "The poet of the sixth century before Christ saw the fact, he did not seek to explain it,—saw the universal fact that he who comes close to God and seeks to do his will in service to man will be misunderstood, deemed

smitten of God, despised and rejected of men. The history of civilization—the martyrs of philosophy, science, political liberty, as well as of religion, declare that the ancient poet saw the deep things of life as they are. The great servants of God, whether their service has been in the cause of advancing knowledge or righteousness, have been and still must be despised and rejected of men, men of sorrows and acquainted with grief. In the lower realms of life, animal and human, we may find the law of tooth and claw; in the higher realms, the law of the soul an offering for sin prevails. This law unites man to man and man to God." (Henry T. Fowler)

This prophet brought comfort and hope to the exiles, strengthened their purpose to "carry on," and promised a leader who should embody their high ideals. The New Testament writers saw in Jesus Christ a fulfilment of that promise.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Count the number of lines in each stanza of the poem, as it is printed in this chapter, and describe the effect produced by the increase of length of the successive stanzas.

Study the author's use of pronouns in the third stanza.

Quote from the poem two or more of the best progressive parallelisms, and tell what the writer gained by using them.

Find a simile and a metaphor.

Point out in the third stanza an antithetic parallelism in which couplets rather than single lines form a parallelism.

Write in your notebooks the logical development of thought through the stanzas of the poem.

What was the historical background of this passage of Scripture?

Why is it not consistent to identify the Servant with the Messiah in Isaiah 9:5, 6?

What universal fact of human experience is stated in this prophecy?

In what sense did Jesus of Nazareth fulfil the expectations of Isaiah 53?

Write in your notebook the three most important ideas of the passage studied in this chapter.

Part 8

LITERARY SELECTIONS FROM THE PERSIAN AND GREEK PERIODS OF JEWISH HISTORY

Chapter XXXII

THE STORY OF JONAH

The Book of Jonah. Four chapters.

1. The Historical Setting.

In the time of Ezra the Jews had become very exclusive, and did not wish to admit into their membership any foreigners. Ezra had brought back from Babylon the priestly law, and, in the process of reconstructing Jewish life, had driven out from Jerusalem the heathen wives of many Jews who, without meaning any harm, had married foreign women. This harsh measure introduced by Ezra had broken up many happy homes. Before long, a party of opposition arose, based upon more liberal ideas. It is supposed that one of the liberal party wrote the story of Jonah as a protest against the narrow ideas of the new legal regime.

It is probable that the author based his story on a reference in 2 Kings 14:25 to a certain prophet Jonah, who was associated with King Jeroboam II in his wars. Jonah is pictured as a narrow-minded nationalist whom God rebukes for his exclusiveness.

It is instructive to compare the book of Jonah

with the book of Ruth, which probably came from the same period of history.

2. The Plot.

Study the development of the plot by the help of the following outline:

Jonah 1:1, The prophet impressed into service.
1:3, He eludes responsibility.
1:4-10, The storm at sea.
1:11-16, Jonah is thrown overboard.
1:17-2:10, An amazing rescue.
3:1-4, Jonah obeys the second command to service.
3:5-10, Nineveh repents.
4:1-5, The moping bigot.
4:6-11, The lesson of the gourd.

3. The Literary Form.

Scholars differ in their view of this book.

> "Is the book history? is it an ancient tradition developed into a story, largely imaginative? is it a parable or allegory? All three views have been maintained; one may hold either view that is found convincing, but if one loses sight of the conception of God that this book contains, he will never know to what sublime height the Old Testament thought rose." (Henry T. Fowler)

George Adam Smith calls attention to the difficulty of taking literally such statements as Jonah's rescue by the fish, and the conversion of the great city of Nineveh in one day. He calls the story of Jonah a parable.

Jeremiah 51:34,44 suggests the allegorical interpretation of the book: "Babylon hath devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath made me an empty vessel, he hath, like a monster, swallowed me up, he hath filled his maw with my delicacies; he hath cast me out." And again, "And I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up; and

the nations shall not flow any more unto him.'' Babylon is here conceived as a great fish that swallowed Israel in the time of the exile, and afterward cast the nation out.

This evidence from Jeremiah is strengthened by the fact that the name Jonah means ''dove,'' and was used as a symbolical name for Israel, as in Psalm 74:19, ''Oh, deliver not thy turtle dove to the wild beast.'' These usages made it easy for a later writer to compose an allegory in which Jonah represented Israel, and the great fish stood for Babylon.

If we do not neglect the wonderful message of the book, it does not matter very much which opinion we adopt. The most recent author on the literature of the Old Testament (Bewer) states his opinion in a rather convincing way:

> Jonah ''was no narrative of historical facts but a prose poem with a purpose, and the fish story, far from being unique, has turned out to be quite common the world over. Such tales of miraculous deliverance, with many variations of detail, were told by many peoples; maritime people spoke of a huge fish or a sea monster, inland people of a wolf or a dragon or bear. And just at Joppa the Greeks located the story of Perseus and Andromeda, with his fight inside the sea monster. The author took this bit of folklore and used it as a means of transporting Jonah back to the land. He never thought that readers would be so much without poetical imagination as to strip it of its fantastic beauty and nullify the wonderful lesson he had to teach in the sequel.''

4. The Teaching of Jonah.

The book of Jonah reaches a loftier height than any other book in the Old Testament in the presentation of the love of God for heathen nations. The last verse suggests that same broad love of the uni-

versal Father which Jesus proclaimed. Professor Wild, in her *Literary Guide to the Bible,* says:

> "This book of Jonah rises to the climax of spiritual vision in the Old Testament in its realization of the universal character of God's love. Its theme is the same as the famous phrase of Faber's hymn, "There is a wideness in God's mercy." Compare this picture of the yearning love of God for all peoples with the parables in the fifteenth chapter of Luke which represent His intense love for the individual, and also with the parable of The Good Samaritan which is more of a parallel, in that it pictures the breaking down of racial prejudice."

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

According to the theory presented in this chapter, what two religious parties existed in Jerusalem in the time of Ezra?

What was the purpose of the book of Jonah?

Tell the story according to the outline given in point 2.

Name three or four different views concerning the literary character of the book.

Which of these interpretations is supported by the evidence from the book of Jeremiah?

What is the meaning of the name Jonah, and how does that affect the interpretation?

What is the great message of the book?

Chapter XXXIII

BIBLICAL NATURE LYRICS

The thunderstorm. Psalm 29.
Nature, the garment of God. Psalm 104.
The voice from the whirlwind. Job 38.

1. Introduction. The Contrast Between the Hebrews, and the Greeks and Babylonians in the Conception of Nature.

The Hebrews had outgrown the child-like fancies of the Greeks and Babylonians. To them "the mountains, winds, water, and the stars above, were not gods, not peopled with gods or demigods." The Hebrew poets, in their treatment of nature, were very much like the poets of the nineteenth century. As Wordsworth and Tennyson regarded nature as itself living, rather than peopled with spirits, so the Hebrews thought of the life in nature as the very life of God.

This attitude to nature, found among the Bible writers, will be best understood by those who have had certain experiences out of doors. Have you ever been on a hillside, just before a great storm? There is a hush that all creatures feel. The animals are in terror, and the sky is wild and unnatural in its yellow glow. With the oncoming of the thunder, wind, and rain, the very trees try to hide themselves. All nature seems conscious, not because all its aspects represent individual gods, as the Greeks thought, but because of a presence that permeates

everything. Wordsworth and the Hebrew poets agree in that.

> "And I have felt
> A presence that disturbed me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things."

Almost every phase of the natural world is pictured in the Old Testament: the sun in Psalm 19, the green pastures in Psalm 23, the thunderstorm in Psalm 29, nature as the garment of God in Psalm 104, the rain in Psalm 77, and the whirlwind in Job 38. "Reverent affection for nature, the recognition of it as an avenue of approach to God, is manifest in the whole texture and fibre of their literature, in single words and phrases, in metaphors and similes, in the flashes of inspiration which sparkle in the midst of other themes."

2. The Thunderstorm.

Imagine the poet standing on the slopes of Mt. Hermon, watching the approach of a terrific storm. He conceives the thunder to be the very voice of God, and this Psalm, indeed, has been called the song of the seven thunders. The shower breaks with terrible force, tearing great limbs from the Lebanon cedars, and the lightning shivers the giant oaks. Finally, it disappears across the desert in a wind storm, and peace reigns.

In the prelude of four lines the poet calls upon the heavenly host; and in the postlude, consisting of

the last four lines, the poet ascribes power to the God of all nations. If one will take the trouble to write out the poem, separating the prelude and the postlude from the fifteen lines which give the substance of the thought, and dividing these fifteen lines into three stanzas of five lines each, he will better appreciate both the art and the thought of the poem. It is important to observe the expressive words in which the fury of the storm is described, and the repetition, seven times, of the word "voice" which signifies thunder. The "flames of fire" stand for the lightning.

The leading thought of the poem is suggested by the word "glory" in verse 9. It expresses that exultant joy in the phenomena of nature, which persons of poetic temperament often feel in a great storm. The most important religious idea is found in the last four lines, which suggest the sense of the security of those who belong to God. Compare with these last four lines, Edwin Markham's *The Place of Peace.*

At the heart of the cyclone tearing the sky
And flinging the clouds and the towers by,
Is a place of central calm;
So here in the roar of mortal things,
I have a place where my spirit sings,
In the hollow of God's Palm.

3. Nature as the Garment of God.

Psalm 104 "gives a charming and highly poetic version of the creation-story" in Genesis. It stands in contrast with Psalm 103, which describes the revelation of God in human history. Psalm 104 praises God for the revelation of His character in the creation and sustenance of the universe. The

suggestion, everywhere appearing in this poem, that nature is but a garment that covers the spirit of God, has a wonderful parallel in a poem written by King Ikhnaton in Egypt in the fourteenth century before Christ.

> O loving Aton, beginning of life!
> When thou riseth in the Eastern horizon,
> Thou fillest every land with thy beauty,
> All cattle rest upon their pasturage,
> The trees and the plants flourish,
> The birds flutter in their marshes,
> Their wings uplifted in adoration to the Sun,
> All the sheep dance upon their feet,
> All winged things fly,
> They live when thou hast shone upon them.

4. The Voice out of the Whirlwind.

Job 38 should be read in connection with the whole book if one wishes to get the full meaning of it, for the "voice from the whirlwind" is the climax of the plot of the book. By itself, however, chapter 38 is worthy of study.

Observe, first, how many different elements of nature are described in beautiful poetic phrase. In these phrases one feels the response of the worshipful spirit of the writer to the divine spirit manifest in all the powers of nature. In Sherman's *Manuscripts of God* man's ability to respond to a multitude of things in nature is well described.

> "Between the Alps and the tiniest blossom that must be wooed out of its hiding place, what unnumbered millions of things there are that can move him, either to a pianissimo response, or to thoughts and feelings that lie too deep for tears. Through his five senses,—and one knows not how many more—life continually plays upon a myriad strings which respond in thought and feeling, now waking melodies no man has ever been able wholly to transcribe or discords which spur him on to more perfect harmonies."

In the second place, study the figures of speech in which this poet, perhaps the most brilliant that ever dealt with religious subjects, expressed his thoughts of God in nature. Explain the meaning of the following figures: "when the morning stars sang," "who shut up the sea with doors," "take hold of the ends of the earth, and the wicked be shaken out," "changed as the clay under the seal," "gates of death," "treasuries of the snow," "bind the cluster of the Pleiades," "loose the bands of Orion," "pour out the bottles of heaven."

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

How does the Bible differ in its view of nature from Greek literature?

Give the quotation from Wordsworth.

Name six or more phases of nature that are finely described in the Old Testament.

Write in your notebooks the analysis of Psalm 29.

What words in this psalm stand for thunder and lightning?

What is the leading thought of the psalm?

What is the difference between Psalm 103 and 104?

Quote verses from Psalm 104 that suggest God's presence within nature.

What parallel to this psalm is found in Egyptian literature?

Make a list of all the different elements of nature referred to Job 38.

Write in your notebooks a list of the different figures of speech in Job 38.

How does this passage from Job produce the feeling of humility in man?

Chapter XXXIV

AN IMPRESSIONIST PICTURE OF OLD AGE

A poem on old age. Ecclesiastes 11:9-12:8.

1. The Structure of the Poem.

This is the best description of old age in all literature. Genung in his *Words of Koheleth* declares that "it is the acknowledged highwater mark of poetic utterance. One is reminded of the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven, wherein, the utmost resources of orchestra proving inadequate to his mighty musical conception, he must needs supplement wood and strings and brass by a chorus of living human voices."

If we print the poem in poetic form, the beauty of the structure is more evident.

Before the sun is darkened,
  and the light of the moon and the stars,
  and the clouds return after the rain;
In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble,
  and the strong men shall bow themselves,
And the grinders cease, because they are few,
  and those that look out of the windows be darkened,
  and the doors shall be shut in the street;
When the sound of the grinding is low,
  and one rises at the voice of the birds,
  and all the daughters of music are brought low:
Yea, one is afraid of a height,
  and terrors are in the way;
And the almond-tree shall blossom,
  and the grasshopper shall be a burden,
  and the caperberry shall burst,
Because man goes to his everlasting home,
  and the mourners go about the streets:

Before the silver cord is snapped,
or the golden bowl is broken,
Or the pitcher is broken at the fountain,
or the wheel is broken at the cistern,
And the dust returns to the earth as it was.

Following the suggestion of William Lyon Phelps, in the sentence in which he says, "One hardly knows which to admire most, the language or the rhythm; the swiftly following succession of vivid metaphors, or the swelling adagio music," one would do well to study the rhythm of the clauses in 12:6, the metaphors in 12:2-6, and the "swelling adagio" effect in 12:1-7.

2. Explanation of Difficult Terms.

The attempt to translate this poem into prose destroys all that sense of "wistfulness, fear, tenderness, regret," and compassion, which in the original is expressed with such transcendent beauty. Instead of saying "In the days when the keepers of the house shall tremble," let us say, "In the days when a man's arms have grown weak;" instead of "and the strong men shall bow themselves," let us say, "When the legs are bent;" instead of "and the grinders shall cease because they are few," "When a man is losing his teeth and his ability to masticate;" and instead of "and those that look out of the windows be darkened," "when a man grows blind."

This prosaic translation may state the facts, but it takes away all the beauty from the chapter. It also shows the wide gulf between poetry and prose.

In addition to the terms which have been explained above, note the interpretation of the following:

"The clouds return after the rain." This probably means that in youth after an experience of sorrow the clouds are dispelled easily; in old age some shadow of sorrow always lingers. "Daughters of music." This is thought to refer to the vocal chords as used in laughter.

"Almond tree." This signifies white hair.

"Silver chord." This means the spine.

"The golden bowl." This is the skull.

3. The Message of Age to Youth.

Ecclesiastes 11:9 should not be interpreted as a cynical warning of judgment, but as a friendly statement of the inevitable result of devotion to pleasure. We may paraphase the passage in the following words: Let youth be happy; for God does not delight in severe punishment, but will be fair in his estimate of young life. The first half of the verse is meant to be an approval of the natural joys of youth. This is in keeping with many other passages in the book (9:7;11:10). Fowler translates 11:10 as follows:

> Remove all worry from thy mind,
> And from thy body banish pain.

Youth passes so quickly, and is in itself so full of natural joys, that one should not spend it in gloom, nor waste it in evil pleasures.

Ecclesiastes 12:1 teaches that a person should not wait until he is old before he thinks of religion, but should make it a natural part of his life in his youth. The last clause suggests that remembering God, and having pleasure are not incompatible ideas.

Ecclesiastes 12:2 is intended to produce in the mind of the reader a feeling of tenderness in view

of the physical infirmities of old age. Read in this connection Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies,* especially the chapter on "The Mystery of Life."

Ecclesiastes 12:8, "all is vanity," stands in contrast with the optimism of the great poets of the nineteenth century. Read Browning's *Rabbi Ben Ezra* with its joyous looking forward to old age.

> Grow old along with me!
> The best is yet to be,
> The last of life, for which the first was made:
> Our times are in his hand
> Who saith, "A whole I planned,
> Youth shows but half; trust God:
> see all, nor be afraid!
>
> . . . . . .
>
> My times be in thy hand!
> Perfect the cup as planned!
> Let age approve of youth, and death
> complete the same!

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Give Professor Genung's estimate of the poem on old age.

What kind of parallelism is found in Ecclesiastes 12:3, 4?

What does William Lyon Phelps mean by the "swelling adagio" music of this poem?

Explain the meaning of the metaphorical phrases in 12:2-6.

What is the teaching of 11:9?

What kind of a parallelism is found in 11:10, and what is the meaning of the couplet?

Discuss the question whether this poem is meant to be a warning against evil because of approaching death, or an appeal for sympathy for old age.

Quote in your notebooks Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar,* Act 2, Scene 2, lines 38-43, on the cowardliness of fearing death.

Report the substance of Ruskin's chapter on the Mystery of Life in his *Sesame and Lilies.*

Commit to memory the quotation from Browning given at the end of the chapter.

Chapter XXXV

TWO SONGS OF TRUST

The eternal God is thy dwelling place. Psalm 90.
Underneath are the everlasting arms. Psalm 91.

1. Introduction. The Wide Appeal of the Psalms and Their Distinctive Message.

Gladstone said, "In the Psalms is the whole music of the human heart, when touched by the hand of His Maker, in all its tones that whisper or swell; for every hope or fear, for every sigh and for every pang, for every form of strength and languor of disquietude and rest."

The Psalms differ from other parts of the Old Testament, not only because of their poetic form, but also in the quality of their thought. Old Testament history narrates the events, while the Psalms show us the very hearts of those who are taking part in the events. Prophecy consists of the sermons and interpretations of current events given by men like Isaiah and Jeremiah, while the Psalms reveal to us the inmost feeling of these great leaders. Philosophy, such as we have in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, is the Jewish interpretation of life, made up of practical observations, while the Psalms express the more intimate relations of the soul.

2. The Eternal God is Thy Dwelling Place.

Psalm 90 has influenced many poets of the world. Shakespeare in *Macbeth* uses the very words of the psalm in Act 5, Scene 5, lines 23-28.

"Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing."

Wordsworth's *Intimations of Immortality* translates the thought of the first part of Psalm 90 into the following beautiful words:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting.
Our soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.

. . . . . .

Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence.

There is a sort of pendulum movement in this psalm, which emphasizes the two thoughts that the author was seeking to contrast, the greatness of God and the weakness of man. Verses 1 and 2 speak of the eternity and power of God, while 4, 5, and 6 describe the brevity and frailty of man's life. This pendulum movement may be traced throughout the psalm.

The three main divisions of the psalm are curiously suggested by three couplets, called "leads." Verse 1 is the "lead" for the following five verses, and the thought suggested in the "lead" is developed in the first stanza of the psalm. Verses 7 and 12 are the "leads" for the second and third stanzas. Faithful study of the development of the thought is the most important task in connection with this great song of trust.

3. Underneath are the Everlasting Arms.

Read Psalm 91 antiphonally. The students should be divided into two groups, group 1 reading verses 1 and 2; group 2, verses 3-7; group 1 should read 9a, and group 2, 9b-13. The voice of God is heard in verses 14-16, which should be read by the teacher. Observe that the prayer in Psalm 90:17 is answered in Psalm 91.

This psalm pictures, in many ways, the happiness of those who trust in God. For example, in verse 3, God is described as having wings with which he protects his people, as the bird its young. In verse 5, the one who puts his confidence in God is regarded as safe as Israel was when the destroying angel wrought such havoc among the Egyptians (Exodus 12:23). Verse 11 has been explained to mean that every man has a guardian angel who watches over him. "Adder," in verse 13, refers to the Egyptian cobra. This was the reptile by which Cleopatra took her own life. "Hath known my name," in verse 14, teaches that one has to learn how to seek God in prayer in order to be successful in his religious life.

4. The Teachings of These Two Psalms.

A few of the important lessons of these psalms may be suggested:

God is our home. See 90:1.

The frailty and transitoriness of man. See 90:5,6.

"We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

The possibility of perfect confidence in God, with

a resulting peace of mind. See 91:1,2. Whittier has expressed this trust, in his *Eternal Goodness.*

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Quote Gladstone's description of the Psalms.

How do the Psalms differ from the history, prophecy, and philosophy of the Old Testament?

What thought in Psalm 90 is repeated in Shakespeare's *Macbeth,* and what words are literally quoted by Shakespeare from the Psalms?

Describe the pendulum movement in Psalm 90, and tell how it makes the thought of the psalm clear.

How are the three main divisions in Psalm 90 indicated?

What is the logical relation between Psalms 90 and 91?

Explain the following words in Psalm 91: "wings", "terror by night", "his angels", "adder", "hath known my name".

Write in your notebooks the analysis of Psalm 91 to illustrate the possible antiphonal use of it.

What is the greatest thought in each of the two songs in this chapter?

Chapter XXXVI

THE HYMNBOOK OF THE PILGRIMS

I will lift up mine eyes. Psalm 121.
The escape of the captives. Psalm 124.
They that trust. Psalm 125.

1. The Origin of this Hymnbook.

In the midst of our Psalms stands a little group of fifteen poems, once used by the temple choir in the services of worship. Our whole Psalter was made up of groups like this, and we shall understand our Book of Psalms better, if we study the group of Pilgrim Psalms in detail.

There are two views of the origin of this group. One is that it consists of songs of the exiles returning from Babylon. This view is supported by many allusions to captivity and distress. See 120:1; 123:3,4; 124:7; 126:1,4. The other view regards these fifteen songs as sung by Jews in connection with the pilgrimages to Jerusalem to attend the annual feasts. Caravans of villagers journeyed together for safety, and after making camp at night, and eating the evening meal, they gathered to sing the songs of their people. When they came in sight of the hills on which Jerusalem was built, they would sing:

> I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
> From whence cometh my help.

These two views may be united into one explanation of these psalms. Some of the songs originated

among the exiles, escaping from Babylon, and were afterwards used by the pilgrims to the annual feasts. It would be very natural for the Jews through the generations succeeding the deliverance of the exiles to keep in memory those tragic events.

2. The Progress of Thought in these Pilgrim Psalms.

Moulton in his *Modern Reader's Bible* combines these fifteen psalms into five groups of three, and suggests that there is a progress of thought in each group. For example, Psalm 120 is the exiles' cry in Babylon; 121 shows the escaped exile on his way to the Holy City; 122 represents him arriving in Jerusalem. Again, in the last group of three, 132 is a temple-dedication hymn; 133 describes the unity of the people in their worship at the temple; and 134 is a recessional for the departure from the temple.

3. I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes.

The outstanding literary qualities of Psalm 121 are its unity and its simplicity. It has four quatrains, and each has two progressive couplets. A curious stairlike structure binds the four quatrains together. This structure is indicated by the repetition of the word "help" in the first and second couplets, and by the use of the word "keep" six times over.

The teaching of the psalm is suggested by the relation of quatrain 1, in which the poet speaks in the first person, to the last three quatrains, in which the poet talks of God, in the third person, as man's great helper. The caravan travellers were often in danger from robbers and exposure, and such a song

as Psalm 121 would be a real comfort, as they camped for the night. Observe how the author stirs the reader's emotions in his contrasted use of negative and positive expressions in verses 3-5.

The association of God with the mountains in verse 1 has often been repeated in the literature of the world, and suggests the unchangeableness of God.

4. The Escape of the Captives.

Psalm 124 is of more than usual interest because of two features: The stairlike movement of the rhythm, produced by means of the series of sentences, repeating in different forms the same thought. Count the number of clauses in the first part of this psalm that repeat the sentiment "when men rose up against us." It is to be noted, also, that the successive clauses each repeat a part of the thought of the preceding sentence, which gives us the feeling that the writer goes back a few steps to get a good running start.

The other feature is the large number of vivid images. In these eight short verses there are not less than eight such images. The picture of destruction, which is so prominent here, is very like that in Lamentations 3:54 and Psalm 42:7.

5. They That Trust in Jehovah.

Psalm 125 was sung near the journey's end, perhaps at that moment when Jerusalem burst on the sight, as the pilgrims climbed the shoulder of the Mount of Olives. The psalm is divided into two parts, both in thought and form. The first six

lines (verses 1 and 2) fall into two stanzas which have an interesting structure, as follows:

They that trust in the Lord are as Mount Zion,
Which cannot be moved,
But abideth forever.
As the mountains are round about Jerusalem,
So the Lord is round about his people,
From this time forth and forever more.

This is an example of what might be called an artistic irregularity. The Hebrew poets often enlarged a couplet by adding one line, producing what is called a "strain." That signifies the addition of a short line which completes the meaning of the second line. The "strain" is more commonly found in the ancient poetry of the Hebrews than in the Psalms. It will be good practice to try to find two or more of these "strains" in Exodus 15:6-11.

This poem is completed at the end of the second verse, consisting of two couplets each enlarged by a third explanatory line. Read the two couplets without lines 3 and 6, and note that the thought is finished apart from the extra lines, but at the same time these lines add much to the poetry.

There are two grand images in these six lines: one of a man who becomes as strong and immovable as a mountain by trusting in Jehovah; the other of the encircling mountains representing the protection that God gives to the human soul.

Verses 3-5 have a different structure and thought. Their import is that the Hebrews shall not suffer from foreign domination lest they be led to do wrong; and that God will bless the good and punish the evil. The reason for the combination of these two groups into one psalm is unknown.

An example of the widespread use of the Pilgrim Psalms is found in the cablegram announcing the escape of the missionaries and soldiers from the British Legation in China at the time of the Boxer uprising in 1900. The message was worded as follows:

Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler; the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Psalm 124:7.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Explain the origin of the Pilgrim Psalms, or as they are sometimes called, the Psalms of Ascent.

How may the two common theories of the origin be combined into one?

Write in your notebooks an arrangement of these fifteen psalms into five groups with three in a group, giving a title to each psalm. See point 2 in this chapter, and the Modern Reader's Bible.

Explain the stairlike structure of Psalm 121.

What is the main teaching of Psalm 121?

Explain the curious rhythm of Psalm 124.

Make a list of the figures in Psalm 124.

What was the purpose of the author in writing that psalm?

When would it be appropriate for a Jewish caravan to sing Psalm 125?

Describe the two parts into which this psalm is divided.

What is a "strain"?

Give examples of the "strain" from this psalm and from Exodus 15.

What are the two chief ideas of Psalm 125?

Conclusion

HOW THIS LITERATURE BECAME A PART OF OUR BIBLE

The Bible has been compared to a river whose beginnings are hidden from one standing on the bank at a point below the place where the last tributary gave its contribution to the full stream. As it sweeps on with all its elements united, bearing on its bosom precious cargoes safely to their destination, no one would think that it was made up of a thousand little streams, which in their turn owe their never failing supply to One Great Source. But back of the river and all its minor tributaries and branches is the great ocean which no one can explain apart from the Creator of heaven and earth.

So to the casual reader in our day the Bible seems a complete and indivisible whole, a miracle of grace and power. As we read it more carefully, and trace the different parts that have been combined to form the perfect whole to their sources, we find that the Bible like the river has had many contributory streams.

Miriam and Deborah sang their songs of deliverance and victory; Jotham repeated his fable, and Elijah gave his orations; the bards of Israel told the stories of the Creation and the Flood, and enlivened many a fireside with the tale of the Wooing of Rebekah and the loyalty of Ruth. These and many other rivulets of song and story found their way into the early literature of the Hebrews.

The legal literature of Israel began with Moses, and, as the centuries went by, the legal tributary added a great volume of material to the onrushing streams of inspired thought.

By the year 850 B. C., in Jerusalem, in the reign of Jehoshaphat, the Jehovist had written the first great history of the Hebrew nation from the point of view of Judah; by the year 750 the Elohist had written his statement of the growth of the nation from Abraham to Jeroboam II, making prominent the incidents and places belonging to Northern Israel, for undoubtedly he was a resident of the north.

These two histories continued to be useful as long as the two rival kingdoms of Judah and Northern Israel survived. When, however, in 722 B. C., Samaria was captured by the Assyrians, and Jerusalem was left as the one capital to which all the Hebrews could look for leadership, the two histories were harmonized and rewritten to form one consistent statement of the development of Israel to the middle of the seventh century.

In the year 621 a new contribution to the rapidly increasing volume of literature appeared. It was a revision of the law of Moses and a new and brilliant description of the significance of Moses' life in the Book of Deuteronomy, probably written during the seventh century by a group of prophetic and priestly reformers (II Kings 22, 23). Meanwhile the great prophets from Amos on had given their messages, and the psalmists had begun to prepare their hymns and prayers.

During the Babylonian exile a new sense of the value of their literature dawned upon the Jews, and the histories and prophetic rolls and patriotic songs

were collected, copied, and preserved with care. The loss of the temple in 586 had led the priests to write out the directions for the sacrifices, lest in the exile the ritual be forgotten. During the exile, also, the priests, aided, perhaps, by Ezekiel began to rewrite the whole history from the Creation. This work was continued by successive generations of priests until a fourth historical work, which scholars call the Priest Code (P), had been completed. About the year 400 B. C. this was woven into one document with JE and D to form our present Pentateuch.

The first clear description of any writings which were regarded as sacred Scripture among the Hebrews is found in Nehemiah 8. There we are told that in the seventh month of the Jewish year, that is, in the autumn, the people assembled for the reading of the Law. The reading of the first day was only a beginning of the presentation of the book which was placed before the people, translated from the Hebrew into the Aramaic language, which had become their form of speech in Babylon, and was explained to them so that they could understand. (Lewis, *How the Bible Grew*)

On the second day the reading was continued (8:13). Some time during that day the readers came to the portion of the Law in which was given an account of the feast of booths. The language is so specific that we can infer from it with certainty where in our Pentateuch they were reading. It was in what we call the twenty-third chapter of the Book of Leviticus. We may see this easily from the following parallel arrangement of the two passages.

Lev. 23:42	Neh. 8:14
Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are home-born in Israel shall dwell in booths.	And they found written in the law, how that Jehovah had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month.

A similar comparison of passages in Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy with Nehemiah show that it was substantially our first five books of the Bible that were accepted as sacred Scripture on that memorable day in Jerusalem.

The second part of our Old Testament to be accepted as authoritative by the Jews consisted of a collection of the prophetic books. When Ezra and Nehemiah presented the Law to the people in Jerusalem, there was no mention of the Prophets. Though it was an occasion of the greatest religious import for the Israelites, one in which a reference to the majestic messages of the prophets would have been exceedingly fitting, there is no mention of any sacred Scripture besides the Law.

This does not mean that there were no prophetic books in the time of Ezra, but, rather, that the Prophets had not yet come to be recognized as sacred Scripture. It was not until about 200 B. C. that we find references to the Prophets as the second sacred division of the Old Testament.

The third part of our Old Testament called "The Rest of the Books," or the "Writings", included Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Esther, and Daniel. There are several lines of evidence to show that "The Rest of the Books" was not regarded as a sacred division of the Old Testament until the Council of

Jamnia, about 90 A. D. By that time our whole Old Testament was regarded as the authoritative Bible of the Jews.

The first Christians were Jews, and naturally accepted the sacred book of their fathers as authoritative. When in later years the Christian Church gathered its basic documents into a sacred canon, called the New Testament, it was regarded as a continuation of the Old Testament, and the two were combined to form our present Bible.

This, in a few words, is the external history of the world's greatest book. One person binds the two great divisions of that book, and indeed all the sixty-six books, into a real unity. That person is Jesus Christ, the central figure of human history. The New Testament is a portrait of Jesus Christ, and the Old Testament, as the early church understood it, was the divine foreshadowing of His coming. The Old Testament had its source in a great yearning that God would reveal himself to man (Job 31:35), and its historic culmination in the coming of the Messiah, who was God's supreme revelation to man and whose glorious character radiates love, light, and hope through the pages of the New Testament.